THE METHODIST BOOK CONCERN

A ROMANCE OF HISTORY

H. C. JENNINGS

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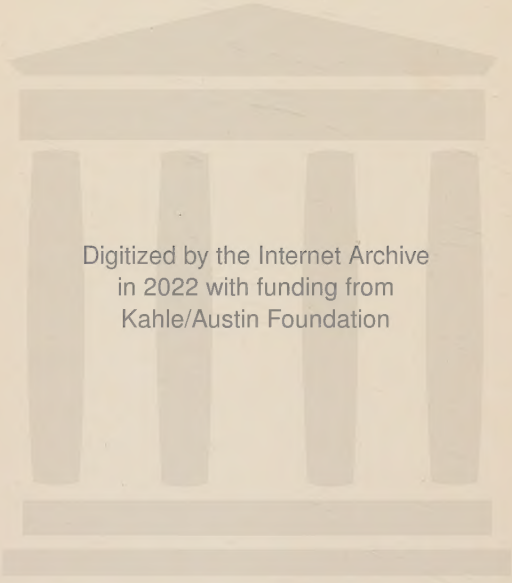
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The Methodist Book Concern

A ROMANCE OF HISTORY

By

H. C. JENNINGS

For Twenty-four Years One of Its Publishing Agents

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THE METHODIST BOOK CONCERN
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Printed in the United States of America

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"The propagation of religious knowledge by means of the press is next in importance to the preaching of the gospel."

—*Asbury.*

FOREWORD

THIS book is the result of a number of cordial invitations by many interested people, asking for its preparation. These requests have come from various bodies in the church as well as from individuals.

The task was accepted with the idea that it would be much easier than it has been. If we had been invited to prepare a series of a dozen volumes the size of this, there would have been abundant material found for such a work. To make a book small enough, and yet comprehensive enough to fulfill its plan, has been the problem. There is so much of historic information beginning even before the beginning of the church, that the question has been what of interesting knowledge might be omitted and still use in our make-up a sufficiently consecutive statement of the literary life of the church as to be reasonably comprehensive. There has been no attempt to furnish general statistical information; that is not what usually interests people. Enough figures and dates have been presented to give an idea of the larger matters unwritten, which can be found in plentiful measure in the older and newer periodical literature and in many books written especially for that purpose. Special biographical material has not been inserted, although we have

kept the record—in the briefest manner possible—of the men who have created and developed the publishing interests of the church, not only the Agents but also the members of the general committees who have served freely and without reward with great effectiveness during the passing years.

This is purposely a narrow book. It would have been easy to take frequent excursions into the more attractive chapters of our church history, where The Book Concern has gone and where it has had a right to be; but space has forbidden. It does not pretend to be a book so liberal as to destroy or lessen its loyalty not only to the denomination, but to that particular branch of the denomination which it is the aim to illustrate. If this book shall furnish such information as is really needed; if it shall help our people to a greater loyalty to our publishing interests; if it shall help our preachers—especially our young preachers—to the better understanding of the philosophy of our publishing interests, we shall be satisfied. For years we have desired that there might be a better understanding among our people concerning the literature, which was orthodox, devout, and intense, in order to make the kind of Methodists out of which the church has grown and come to its present large place in the world, and which was the only literature published in the olden time. If there shall be an increase of intelligence concerning these things, through any influence which this book may have, we shall be glad indeed.

FOREWORD

This book does not pretend to be wholly original; on such a theme it could not be. We have gathered our facts where we could find them; we have quoted from a good many different authors who, in their turn, had quoted, in the same way. The main fact is that the same reasons have been given, the same conclusions reached, and the same results must follow. We greatly desire that there shall be, through its influence, an increase of denominational loyalty.

H. C. JENNINGS.

Portland, Oregon, 1924.

CHAPTER I

A CHAPTER OF THE BEGINNINGS

Before the beginning, the real beginning, of the interest manifested by Methodists in literature, and the publishing and distribution of books, was the love which John Wesley had for books. His work as an author has never been thoroughly appreciated. In all his life of constant travel, constant preaching, his strength given to the building up of his churches, he still found time to write more than twenty volumes and to edit more than one hundred more which became in itself a religious library far more valuable than anything at that time in existence. His own fine literary powers, his personal culture in the best schools of his day, the constantly growing interest in the intellectual life of his people made it possible for him to make demands upon his preachers and people which made a fine contribution to the completion of his work.

The mission and the place of Church Literature is worthy of consideration. Methodism early recognized its mission to mold the character of the common people, first by an appeal to conscience and a development of religious life, and then by an intellectual culture which was the foundation of all that followed.

So the church, founded by booklovers, early adapted its work to the masses. The common people of England had been neglected up to this time. Little attempt had been made at any previous time to bring them into more intelligent faith. The production of books, books of the right kind to fulfill the above purposes, became an organic plan of the Methodist Episcopal Church of America when that was formed, on the principle that a sermon or conversation might be lost and forgotten in the maze of other duties and interests.

Settlers in the New World were hard workers. They had little time for the development of intellectual life, but the printed page and the bound volume placed in the homes of these people out on all the frontiers and along the seaboard would feed and preserve their faith even though the preacher only came occasionally. The book was there preserving the things they had heard the preacher say.

It is worthy of note that the genius of Methodism required that education and literature should go hand in hand.

The first Conference of Methodist preachers held in England was in 1739. At that Conference steps were taken for the founding of a school, which was considered the next most important to the development of religious experience. This school was at Kingswood near Bristol. It was founded for boys. It became one of the great forces of early Methodism and has had a wonderful career. In like manner, when the first Conference of Methodist

preachers was held in America in 1784 steps were taken for the founding of a school in this country. The mind of our American preachers seemed to run in the same lines as their English brethren of fifty years before and the school known as Cokesbury College at Abingdon, Maryland, was established and became the first expression of American Methodism planned for education.

Methodism began its march across the world from the gates of Oxford University. The call has always been for scholarship. John Wesley was the first man to set the example for modern cheap prices with the idea that these prices might be sustained by large sales. His genius was shown by the fact that he either wrote in full or edited books on grammar, poetry, logic, medicine, music, philosophy and theology, and they were surprisingly cheap. Two thirds of them were sold for less than a shilling each, and one fourth of them were sold for a penny. Thus they were brought within the reach of the poorest. They were sold by hundreds of thousands, and in this way the early Methodists became the most wisely instructed Christians in the world of their time; and it is no doubt a fact that during the last two centuries no English writer has equaled John Wesley in the number of his literary productions.

The church began in America in 1766. It worked without organization and plan for a few years. As societies grew up in the principal cities and rural settlements of the Atlantic seaboard, and as the

earliest preachers all came from Mr. Wesley's societies in England and Ireland, this made the distribution of the best books, especially those of John Wesley, a part of their work; and these were brought over from the mother country and sold here to the people who had been deprived of religious reading in this country up to that time.

The first publisher of Methodist books in this country was Robert Williams, a young preacher, a member of the Irish Conference. He came from England in 1769, only three years after Philip Embury began his work in New York. Williams felt the call to America and went to Mr. Wesley for advice and instruction. He was given permission to make the voyage and work under the direction of two English missionaries, Richard Boardman and Joseph Pilmoor. These men did not arrive in this country for two months after Williams reached here. He had met a gentleman at his home in Ireland, a Mr. Ashton, who had visited America and proposed to visit it again; he stirred Williams greatly by his description of the possibilities of the country and the future of religious work in the new land. He expected to sail for America on a given date and urged Williams to go with him; and so, without money, without baggage of any kind, with a loaf of bread and a bottle of milk as his only supplies, Williams reached Plymouth and went aboard the ship just ready to sail. He thought that if he did not find Ashton, he would somehow get across the ocean on the food he had provided, and that he

could work his passage; but on the ship he found his friend, who very generousy paid his way and took care of him until they landed in America.

Williams immediately began his work, first for a short time in New York and then in the South. He believed in the printed page; where he could not preach himself he knew that Mr. Wesley's sermons would do the work. To the places which he could not visit for lack of time and greatness of distances, he believed he could send the gospel in this way; so on his own responsibility he reprinted sermons and tracts and distributed them far and wide, especially through the South. After three or four years of this work, which was agreed by all to be of great value and help to the cause, the Conference which met in 1773 decided that it was not right to publish and sell the works of Wesley and other publications without some sort of central authority. The little Conference that met that year passed an order that no one should do any further printing for Methodists except with the advice and consent of the brethren; that Mr. Williams should be allowed to close out by sale the stock he had on hand, but to print no more except under the new rule. This would seem at first to work a hardship on a good man; but these preachers looked into the future, and what they did was justified by later events in the organization and concentration made by an official plan of publishing in which all could agree, and in which there would be a center of authority as to what should be published.

Williams did his work without any authority beyond himself; but he did good work, was complimented by Asbury, and is entitled to the credit of beginning the book publishing of Methodism in the United States of America.

It is commonly believed that there was no thought or mention of profits in the sale of books until The Book Concern itself was started some years later; but Jesse Lee, in his *History of the Methodists,* tells us that about 1782 the profits from the sale of imported books in the hands of the preachers became a matter of Conference action. No books were printed in this country, but they were brought here and sold everywhere by the itinerants.

At this time all the preachers were required, by vote, to bring all such profits arising from sales to the Conference and turn them over to be used to make up the deficiencies of the preachers' allowances and for the relief of the worn out men. We have not been able to find a record of the amounts so secured, but no doubt this was the beginning of a system of relief, which has continued in some form down to the present time. In other words, the profits of the book business created by the preachers were accounted for and disposed of several years before The Book Concern itself was organized and put into operation.

CHAPTER II

THE HISTORY

It is now a matter of history that The Methodist Book Concern was organized by the Conference in May, 1789, in John Street Church, New York. The United States as a government was then only two years old, the federal Constitution having been adopted in 1787. Washington had been inaugurated the first President, only four months before. The total population of the United States was only 3,000,000. The Methodist Episcopal Church had been organized for four and one half years. There was a total membership in the entire country of 58,000. This particular Conference of preachers consisted of twenty-five members. These were, for the most part, strong and substantial men, and they have left a permanent impress upon the church and the country, some of them receiving recognition to the present time.

Francis Asbury presided at the Conference in the fullness of his strength. Thomas Coke was there, the scholar and our first apostle of missionary zeal; Richard Whatcoat, who became a bishop; Freeborn Garrettson, one of the great men of his time who fulfilled a ministry of fifty years, tender, zealous, heroic, and of giant strength. Others

present were: Thomas Morrell, a soldier of the Revolution; Jesse Lee and John Lee, Phœbus, McClaskey, and several others. At the secretary's table sat John Dickins, whose fame and service to the church must brighten while the church and Book Concern endure.

This remarkable little Conference of only twenty-five men was the first religious body in this country to send its congratulations to George Washington, the first President. It also commissioned Jesse Lee to establish Methodism in New England; and it established The Methodist Book Concern. These are sufficient to make this Conference distinct and historic in the annals of the church.

These men confronted great problems and attempted a great work. They felt the serious embarrassment of the church being without any plan for publishing books. It was the first great discussion and determination that the success of the publishing enterprise thus begun must depend upon the faithfulness of the ministers who were to act as agents. These ministers had already sufficient burdens, compelled as they were to travel continuously through extensive forests, crossing rivers that had no bridges, preaching wherever a handful of people could be gathered together. The membership of the church was poor, money was exceedingly scarce and it was difficult for the average family, in those days, to buy anything that was not essential to their daily life. These ministers, counseling together in New York, had no experience in the pub-

lishing business. They had no precedent to follow and they had no funds. The church had no funds that they could use; but, somehow, they believed that even without money this contemplated work could be done. These twenty-five men were all of one accord; and the record was made: "We have now settled our printing business." They agreed, with great unanimity, to establish a house and proceed to the publication and circulation of religious books. It was easy to pass a resolution expressing their desire and determination to see that it should be on a safe basis, and that the profits of the books should be applied as we have already stated; but this was a large anticipation of proceeds before their creation—before they had begun to create anything. No finer act of faith has been recorded in the history of the Christian Church. The one thing discouraging was the lack of money. Then came the historic incident, so often related, of how John Dickins, the secretary of the Conference and the scholar, said: "Brethren, be of good courage; I have six hundred dollars, the savings of my life's labors. I will lend it all to the Conference for the beginning of this work." The Conference accepted it, of course, and John Dickins was appointed "Book Steward"—the title used in England and used in this country until 1820.

The new enterprise was located in Philadelphia. It seems to have been established there in order to carry out the already established plan of the itinerant system. John Dickins had been appointed

pastor of the church in Philadelphia, and being Book Steward, the new business had to follow the pastor.

Mr. Wesley in England had issued an abridgement of Thomas à Kempis' *Imitation of Christ,* to which he gave the title, *Christian's Pattern.* It was purely a devotional book, but, as has been said, was a good cornerstone upon which to build an ever-growing business.

Mr. Dickins worked slowly but surely in gathering and printing in the cheapest possible form several of the best things in the literature of that time. Some of these were tracts, and these were not given away but sold; for means must constantly be created to continue the business. It is related that Mr. Dickins used to wear, in his travels about the city, a tall hat, and that he carried a small stock of his publications in the top of his hat. Being a very courteous gentleman, frequently meeting friends, acquaintances, and others on the streets, he used to remove his hat, and while it was in his hands had the habit of offering for sale the contents of the same; by which it was said, he built up considerable business. Whether the story be true it furnishes proof of the single-mindedness and loyalty of the faithful Steward.

The Book Concern remained in Philadelphia until 1804. It followed a truly itinerant plan in its existence. It began its work at No. 43 Fourth Street. In 1792 it was located at No. 182 Race Street; in 1794, at No. 44 North Second Street. In 1795, it

was moved to No. 50 North Second Street, where it was continued until after Mr. Dickins' death, in 1798.

Having no printing establishment, that work was done first by Pritchard & Hall, on Market Street; then by Parry Hall, on Chestnut Street; then by Henry Tuckniss, on Church Alley; then by William W. Woodward, Chestnut Street; and finally, while the business continued in Philadelphia, by Solomon W. Conrad, at No. 22 Pewter-Platter Alley.

Ezekiel Cooper became the second Book Steward in May, 1799. At that time there was but one Methodist church in Philadelphia, and he was its pastor. Local difficulties arose in Methodist circles in the city; The Book Concern became somewhat involved and embarrassed by these, and this seems to have been the reason for the removal of the Concern to New York. In a very interesting story of those times by Doctor Phœbus, called *Light on Early Methodism,* we find this statement: "During the Conference year of 1802, Mr. Cooper visited three Annual Conferences and sought to advance the interest of the church in the sphere in which he was appointed. The spirit of opposition to his remaining in Philadelphia was still increasing, and within a year became so decided that the preachers of the Philadelphia Conference, as well as some of the laymen in Philadelphia, determined, if it were possible, to have him and The Book Concern removed. The special ground of complaint was that he had now been stationed in Philadelphia for

three years, and his brother ministers were subject to more frequent removals, according to the itinerant plan, he should not be permitted to become an exception. The matter was laid before the Philadelphia Conference in May of 1803, and it was there resolved that The Book Concern should be removed to Baltimore and the business conducted there under the supervision of Mr. Cooper. But he declined at once to make the change, and by his refusal called forth a letter from Bishop Asbury urging him to comply with the action of the Philadelphia Conference. We quote a part of the Bishop's letter: 'My dear Brother: As the Executive of the Conference, and your friend, I think it my duty to tell you that it is your duty, in obedience to the Conference, to move to Baltimore about the first of October.' Mr. Cooper positively refused to move The Book Concern to Baltimore and gave as his reasons: First, It is not for the interest of The Book Concern. Second, the Philadelphia Conference has no authority to order a removal, as the last appointment was made by the General Conference. Third, neither the preachers or people of Baltimore have asked for a transfer."

The General Conference of 1804 met in May in the city of Baltimore. At this session, after fifteen years of varying fortunes in the city of Philadelphia, The Book Concern was moved to New York. The vote to remove from Philadelphia stood 36 to 26; to move it to New York, stood 38 to 36. It has been said that Philadelphia parted with The Book

Concern without regret and that New York held no jubilee of welcome on its arrival.

The General Conference consisted that year of 107 members, and the contest for removal was between New York and Baltimore.

Doctor Atkinson, in his *Centenary of American Methodism,* gives us this statement following the history related above: "In 1804 The Book Concern was removed from Philadelphia to New York. In the General Conference of that year, Baltimore and New York were competitors for the Concern, and the latter was chosen as the place for its future location, by a majority of only two votes. It was established in one small room on Gold Street, New York. Mr. Cooper, in addition to performing the duties of Book Steward, served the church in Brooklyn as pastor. On Mr. Cooper's own motion, at the General Conference of 1804, the term of the Book Steward was limited to eight years, and in 1808 John Wilson, who was Mr. Cooper's assistant the previous quadrennium, was elected Book Steward, and his assistant was Daniel Hitt. During that year the business was removed to a small house on Pearl Street, in which Mr. Wilson also had his residence. He died in 1810. From 1810 to 1812, the business of editing, publishing, selling, and packing was in one room on the corner of Church and White Streets, and was under the superintendency of Daniel Hitt. From there the Concern was moved to Elm Street, where it occupied two lower rooms. After a time there was another removal, this time to

Chatham Square. In 1820 the official title of Book Steward was changed to Book Agent.

Nathan Bangs and Thomas Mason, were the Book Agents elected in 1820. A bindery was opened in 1821 in the basement of the old Wesleyan Academy building, which stood on Crosby Street. In 1824 a printing office was opened and the business was once more removed, this time to Fulton Street.

It is a matter of history that the senior Agent at this time—Nathan Bangs, a far visioned man of great executive ability—taking count of the conditions then existing and finding that The Book Concern was greatly in debt, that its credit was much impaired, that it was difficult to raise money, that nearly all its accounts receivable were scattered widely over the country and not easy of collection, and believing that without possessing printing press or type or any machinery entering into the make-up of a publishing house, the future of The Book Concern, financially, was imperiled unless some radical changes were made, announced to the Book Committee, which consisted of members of the New York Conference, his belief that the work could be carried on only by the establishing of a printing house of their own, and that that was the first step to be taken. The Committee reminded him that they were already heavily in debt. They asked him what it would cost to establish first the bindery, as he desired, and later the printing office. He gave them the figures, in round numbers. After deliber-

ation, the Committee told him that as his proposition was to very largely increase the debt—for they had no money for his improvements except by borrowing—they could not give their consent to such an expense and increase of debt. He replied that it had to be. It was the only way. The Committee then gave him a mandatory order to go no further in this attempt. He notified them plainly that he intended to go further and they then threatened him with charges, a trial, and removal from his position. He did not change his determination or his plan. In spite of the attitude of the Book Committee he went ahead. When they met again, at the regular time, meeting once in three months, they found the bindery established and at work. They expostulated: "Brother Bangs, why did you, against our judgment, go so much further into debt?" He replied: "I did it in order to get out of debt. If you will not trouble me, I will get out of debt and then we will have prosperity." He was not prosecuted for his disobedience. He did go into debt to get out of debt. The bindery was a success from the start. In 1824 the printing house was established and the two have ever since gone on together, creating our great source of business and of profit.

In 1825 the Wesleyan Academy buildings were purchased and the business was conducted there until 1833, at which time it was moved into the buildings erected especially for its use on Mulberry Street. And so The Book Concern had wandered in the wilderness of lower New York for thirty

years, and it now seemed to have reached a resting place; but less than three years later, the new Book Concern plant was burned to the ground. The loss was $250,000. After the fire of 1836, which destroyed the Mulberry Street building, an appeal was made to the church for donations toward a new building fund. These donations amounted to $95,-281.30; these came voluntarily and willingly from the Methodist people and thus showed the interest and loyalty of the membership toward the Book Concern. It was soon rebuilt on the same site and continued to be headquarters of The Book Concern for thirty-three years, or until 1869, in which year a fine building at No. 805 Broadway, at the corner of Eleventh Street, was purchased on the authority of the General Conference of 1868. This building in its architecture and solidity of appearance was inferior to none in the city of New York at that time. It was not long until it was discovered that it had not been built for mercantile purposes and could not be easily adapted to the needs of a publishing house; so, while the retail store and offices were removed to it, the entire manufacturing department remained at Mulberry Street until 1890.

The Western House of the Concern was organized as a branch of the New York House in 1820, following the authorization given by the General Conference in May of that year, to be located in the city of Cincinnati.

CHAPTER III

HISTORICAL STATEMENT—CONTINUED

At the close of the Revolutionary War the Methodist Episcopal Church was organized because it could no longer be conducted in an official way with the Wesleyans of England. It was organized to take control of all Methodist people in the new country; this was at the Christmas Conference of 1784, held in Baltimore.

There was a considerable effort for several days to find a satisfactory name for the new church. It was growing rapidly and extending widely over the American colonies. It was necessary for a continuous and authoritative supervision, which they concluded could only be secured by a form of episcopal authority.

John Dickins, who became the first Book Steward, was a genius in many directions, acknowledged to be the first scholar among the preachers and thoroughly imbued with the doctrines and plan of this new evangelical movement. To him is credited the naming of the church. Putting all the facts and possibilities together, he declared at the Christmas Conference that the only comprehensive title to be used was The Methodist Episcopal Church. This name was chosen; and in all the years that have followed his wisdom has been approved.

One of the vital matters before this first Conference was the question of books—how they should be obtained, how they should be distributed, and what should be the disposition of the profits, if any were made.

The new government of the United States, formed after the Revolution, made it necessary for the preachers to take steps and make new plans, as the government had created revenue duties for its support which made it much cheaper to print books in this country than to import them already printed from England.

The question of books for the people and education for the young was inseparable. With the organization of the Conference came the planning of a Conference school; and it was the same supreme importance as to good books, which was recognized in this action, although as a church institution, the publishing business was not officially organized until five years later.

The desire of Mr. Asbury that all Methodists should be a people well founded in the doctrines and possibilities of their faith, was always present in his administration.

Books were scarce, and for the times they were high-priced; but a few books might be owned in any family, and they had but few titles to offer. We who live in an age of public libraries in every village, and of cheap books—a multitude in quantity, and a great variety in quality—have little conception of the literary and intellectual poverty of

those times. The day of periodicals, dailies, weeklies, and monthlies which come to us was then utterly unknown. Only a few small weeklies were printed and were not circulated widely. Not a single religious periodical was published in America. There was no Sunday-school literature, for there were no Sunday schools in America until Bishop Asbury began that work in a few places in Virginia, at almost the exact time that Robert Raikes began his Sunday school work in England. It can be seen that almost the only book circulators in America were the Methodist circuit riders; they were wise enough to sell the books rather than give them away, for in doing this they impressed the buyer with the value of the book; having bought it they would keep it. This also secured the funds to continue in the book business, and thus the distribution of books became a regular part of their work, strenuously insisted upon by Asbury. They were not accounted successful in their work unless they not only by preaching and revival work created the churches, but also left behind the books to build up the people in their faith, while they went on their wide journeys elsewhere. In this work, some of these men were especially successful and the placing of Christian books and pamphlets among the people had become established before the church was fully organized. It is often said, in these later days, that our preachers have too many other duties, having no time to sell books. We may grant that this is partly true; but it is also true that great

good is done by those who still keep up this work; indeed, we have knowledge of some who have said it was beneath the dignity of a minister of the gospel to become a salesman of books, that all that kind of work should be in other hands. But it is a fact that ministers who have been careful of the intellectual instruction and improvement of their people and have continually recommended the great books of the period have secured the most permanent success.

Let it be understood that the work of the preachers, in those early days, consisted not only in the preaching of the gospel according to the Wesleyan interpretation, but that their second greatest duty was what they called, in those days, the "dispersing" of books, not only before the Publishing House was organized, but long after, second only to the duty and importance of their preaching. And let it be remembered that from the first it was planned to publish books and tracts, not to make money but to spread religious literature among a destitute people. These men were very wise in that they did not give away their books and tracts; thus putting a value on them and fixing them as a part of the furnishings of every Methodist home that could be reached.

The Book Concern itself was organized in 1789. It began its life with the organized existence of the nation. The little Conference of twenty-five preachers met in John Street Church in the city of New York, Bishop Asbury presiding at the deliberations. Many of the men who were laying the foundations

of Methodism in America were present. All seemed to be cast in heroic mold. They were willing to go anywhere and to do anything that had relation to their ministry. They were bound together by unusual bonds growing out of their mutual interests in reaching the people with the same doctrines.

At this Conference, which took up the individual work of all the preachers, which made plans for a union of administration in the churches, which reached certain agreements about the doctrines of the church, there was a large interest in what should be done about the books. First, they had a concern for souls; then they had a concern for the culture of these souls, which created their concern for education and their concern for books; and it is altogether likely that when after a few years, the book of *Discipline* first speaks of the publishing enterprise as THE BOOK CONCERN, it had its derivation from the original question of the earlier Conference: What shall we do with our concern for souls, our concern for education and our Book Concern?

It is well to repeat what we have written on a previous page: There was no money to begin any organized publishing plant, until John Dickins who was stationed in Philadelphia and who seemed to be the most scholarly man among them, believing most intelligently in the value of books for the people, arose and said: "I have six hundred dollars which represent my life's savings. I am willing to put that into this enterprise, and I shall be glad to do it,

believing it could be put to no better use." And this offer was eagerly accepted as a loan, it being understood that it would be repaid at the first possible opportunity; and John Dickins was appointed the first Book Steward, having that title given him as it was the title of the head of the publishing business in England. Bishop Asbury, interested long before this event occurred in some plan of organization for publishing, maintained his interest until his death, always behind the Book Steward with wise and ready advice.

It is well known that Mr. Dickins served in this capacity from 1789 to 1798. The greatest scourge of yellow fever which ever came to the American continent visited Philadelphia in the latter year. That city was at that time the seat of government of the United States. The President and his Cabinet and the officiary of the State all centered there. The plague grew and increased until the situation became desperate. All the officials of the United States government are said to have left the city, and every one who had the opportunity among the citizenship moved away, fleeing in panic, to escape the scourge. Two men, especially, who were among the most widely known, remained, and these men worked together, side by side, day after day, nursing the sick and helping the unfortunate with food; burying the dead, and doing everything possible to relieve the distress; and when the plague had practically subsided, one of them took the fever and died within a week. Those two men who worked together and

helped to relieve the stress that was upon the city were John Dickins, the Methodist Book Steward, and Alexander Hamilton, the secretary of the treasury of the United States. The man who died was John Dickins. In the nature of the case, in the midst of the year's business, the affairs of the small Book Concern were in a very unsettled state. The debts were about $4,500; the amounts due from preachers almost the same; the stock on hand a little more than $4,000. The institution was practically bankrupt, because the amounts due were scattered up and down the Atlantic Coast, from New England to the Carolinas, and would be hard to collect. No doubt matters would have worked out if Mr. Dickins had lived.

The Rev. Ezekiel Cooper was selected by Bishop Asbury, at the Philadelphia Conference, which had jurisdiction at the time, as the successor to Mr. Dickins. After looking into the matter briefly he declined the appointment; refusing to go into it until Bishop Asbury pleaded with him as being the only man fitted, to whom it was possible to give the task, and at last Mr. Cooper yielded on certain conditions, which he laid down to the Conference and which the Conference accepted; that if he took the business over, he must be allowed time to pay the debts, collect the accounts, to put in new stock, to get the institution on its feet, before the Conference should make any demands upon him whatever for any share of the profits for any purpose. And following this agreement by the Conference, Cooper

went to work. He had a remarkable career as a church publisher. On a motion which he himself made in the General Conference of 1804, the term of the Book Steward was limited to eight years; at the end of this time he gladly laid down his task and went back to the pastorate; but he left all the debts paid, all credit reestablished, and a net capital of $45,000, with which the Concern could go on to larger development.

There have been larger figures presented, larger apparent results in later years; but no man has ever brought order out of chaos and credit out of nothing, in the fine way in which Ezekiel Cooper managed the business, and for which he should have all credit.

Mr. Dickins being suddenly taken away, left his family in rather destitute circumstances. A little historic item should be mentioned here. Bishop Asbury, who was all his life unmarried, sets down in his Journal on a day in 1815, this entry: "I have this day made my will and have appointed Daniel Hitt and Henry Boehm my executors. It may surprise some who read this journal, if anyone ever does read it, that I have an estate to will away since my salary for thirty years has been but $80 a year, of which I have had to spend about $50 a year on my horse; but it is a fact that certain friends of mine, chiefly on the Eastern Shore of Maryland, have from time to time left me by will small legacies, some of which I have never taken, as I did not need the money as much as the rightful

heirs did; other amounts I have kept, and if I do not spend it before I die I shall leave an estate of about $2,000, and I have willed it all to the Book Concern."

Bishop Asbury died a year after this entry, and we find in the report of the Publishing Agents at New York for the quadrennium ending in 1832 that that legacy of Bishop Asbury's amounted at that time to $2,148.03, and was still carried as a debt of The Book Concern, payable to his executors but "irredeemable," according to the phrase at that time, the principal never to be called for, but the interest on this legacy of $2,148.03 to be paid in the form of an annuity to Mrs. John Dickins, during her life time; after which it was absorbed in the capital of The Book Concern. After sixteen years the terms of the legacy were completed by the death of Mrs. Dickins.

From this it would appear that Bishop Asbury provided the money for the first annuity for a preacher's widow in the history of our church, setting an example to others, significant of what has been done so often through the years.

The Book Concern has a direct relation to the church when judged from the business standpoint. It has always been expected that the produce of The Book Concern would be sold at a margin of profit. It was the only safe way to conduct the business and have anything left at the end of a year with which to continue the business.

The question of the proper disposition of these

profits has been often a matter of debate. It is well for us to examine what the fathers said about it in the days of the beginning. I am quoting now from an original copy of the *Discipline* concerning an action which was approved by the Conference held at Baltimore, the approval being dated December 27, 1784. It is therefore the first official deliverance of the organized church on this matter, and we find the record of this action in the *Discipline* of 1789. Let it be observed that the action was taken five years before The Book Concern was properly organized. We quote:

Section XXXI. On the printing of books and the application of profits arising therefrom.

As it has been frequently recommended by the preachers and people that such books as are wanted be printed in this country, we therefore propose,

1. That the advice of the Conference shall be desired concerning any valuable impression, and their consent be obtained before any steps be taken for the printing thereof.

2. That the profits of the books, after all the necessary expenses are defrayed, shall be applied according to the direction of the Conference, toward the College, the Preachers' Fund, the deficiencies of preachers' salaries, the distant missions, or the debts of our churches.

We do not need to enter into larger quotations from other sections of the *Discipline* of that time, as it will be seen that it was hoped to make a profit on the business and that it was planned for from the start. In the present day, therefore, we are carrying out the original idea when we do business at a profit.

It will be seen also that the organizers of this great work had in mind that the needy causes which appealed to them at that time should each have help from The Book Concern profits; that the divisions as to the ratio and amounts should be made at the discretion of the Conference, which meant that the Conference should settle these matters after debate and consideration.

There have always been some delicate questions in connection with Book Concern profits. Here and there we find men who sincerely believe that our great mission is to manufacture and sell the publications of the Concern at what would be practically the cost of production.

It has been clearly demonstrated for many years that it is financially profitable for The Book Concern to own and operate its own manufacturing plant, that the policy of having our printing and binding done by contract with outside parties cuts out entirely one item of profit. We have now many hundreds of thousands of dollars invested in buildings, presses, and other equipment for doing all this work ourselves, thus controlling the entire operation of producing books and periodicals. Without having the exact figures at hand, we do not hesitate to say that the net earnings of our manufacturing plants have paid for every dollar expended in such buildings and equipment. Gradually there grew up in these printing houses the business of job work, both printing and binding, for other people. This work has been taken on to keep the

printing machinery busy, as we have not needed the entire time of the equipment for our own work. This work for the outside customer has proven very profitable, and later in this history we hope to show that a very considerable portion of the earnings we have been able to turn over to the Conferences for distribution among our veterans has been made by this class of work.

We should take note of the decision of the preachers of that early Conference as recommended in the quotations made by the disposition of profits; there is a breadth in their idea which has been lost sight of largely by us of the present day. Their profits were in the future. The resolution expresses their hopes. They had made plans for a college at this same date, 1789, and they were providing for the future college by the future profits on their books, thus showing a faith that is worthy of notice.

They had in mind the college first, then the "Preachers' Fund," then the deficiencies in the preachers' salaries, and finally the distant missions and the debts of the churches.

This is the first missionary document or provision for missionary funds in the history of American Methodism. The Missionary Society was not organized until 1819, thirty years after the faith and hope of the preachers found its first expression in this declaration.

"The Preachers' Fund" was in the form of an endowment, created by the contributions of the

preachers, annually, and such other gifts as came to their hands for this purpose. The preachers were required to add two dollars each, annually, to this fund, the principal of which was to be invested and the interest used in the annual distribution. It is the first attempt at endowment that we have any knowledge of in our church. At a later date the "Chartered Fund" was organized, and by the order of the General Conference the amount then in the "Preachers' Fund" was paid over to the "Chartered Fund," and only the one fund was continued. It was in the original plan not only to supply from The Book Concern profits the deficiencies of preachers' salaries and help the worn-out men, but to make an annual contribution toward the principal of the "Preachers' Fund." This order was carried out when it became the "Chartered Fund," as it was found to be necessary to have a legal organization.

In 1808, when the Constitution of the church was adopted, the use of any portion of Book Concern profits to increase the principal of the "Chartered Fund" was not included in the plan. It has been the ruling, under the Sixth Restrictive Rule, that all earnings should be paid out each year; and under that plan has been conducted the later Book Concern history.

But we want to call attention to the fact that the original purpose of the organizers of The Book Concern, anticipating profits, was that an endowment fund to be called the "Preachers' Fund" was to be built up by setting aside a fraction of these

profits each year, in addition to the contribution of the preachers, the whole to be put at interest, the interest of which should go to the worn-out preachers each year.

In the light of our later history, and especially when we consider the larger profits which have accrued within the last forty years, we cannot refrain from saying that if the original idea of the "Preachers' Fund" had been maintained, if each member of a Conference during his effective years had made a small contribution annually; if a certain part of The Book Concern profits had been set aside to be added to the principal of the "Preachers' Fund," this could have gone on for more than one hundred and thirty years without working hardship upon anyone and we would have had an endowment fund at the present time of many millions, which would have provided a comfortable support for every worn-out minister, for the widows and orphans of those who have died in the work, and for every sick man who was laid aside, to relieve their needs and provide for them to the end of their lives a generous support.

We believe, in the light of present day facts and needs, that this would have been a very wise thing to do. A plan of this sort would have resulted in a perpetual contribution to our Conference veterans and would have placed their necessities above the fluctuations of the business world. Whether the year's business proved to be profitable or otherwise, the veterans would have been provided for. It is

not too late for such a plan to be organized and carried out.

Viewed from the latest standpoint it may be well to add here that not only has The Book Concern, East and West, and in all its depositories, been able to build and rebuild and enlarge all their buildings within recent years, equip the business with the very best and latest machinery, pay all debts and all running expenses, meet every opportunity for cash discounts, amounting to thousands of dollars each year as a saving; but to face the world to-day as the largest religious publishing house in existence, if not the largest publishing house of any kind in the world.

Let it not be forgotten that the organization and maintenance of The Methodist Book Concern has not been built upon a commercial basis. Throughout the years it has demonstrated its commercial integrity by its increasing growth and power; but what is a larger matter, The Book Concern has its mission as the interpreter of truth to our people. It is the high duty as well as the privilege of those who are responsible for the quality of our publications, that they go everywhere in the quest for truth. They should stand where they can see that the man of science, possessed to-day by his doubts and yet sincerely seeking light, has the help of The Book Concern ideas and genius to bring him nearer to the truth. It is the high place of The Book Concern to teach that the ultimate of all truth is in the knowledge of the Son of God.

The Methodist Episcopal Church, clothed with a great mission, with its brain and its heart and its faith all enlisted, should speak to its own people and to the great world through its Book Concern in the literature which so emphasizes the essentials of doctrine and righteousness of life, which is the heritage from our fathers, and which has given us the right to live. We have money enough and brains enough and people enough to stamp our doctrines and our literature upon the heart of this generation if we will only get busy and do it.

The Book Concern is called to be an interpreter of faith and culture and Christian practice, and he who thinks of it as anything less than this misses its primary right to live. We have given to us, if we will take it, the joy of ministering to the spiritual life of the people, to put in a plain way the verities of the gospel, so that they shall be fortified in faith and helped over the hard places of life.

CHAPTER IV

HISTORICAL STATEMENT—CONCLUDED

The more one studies the history of this remarkable church organization, the more one sees that the larger part of the history must be omitted in a work of this kind. It would be easy to expand a history like this, from materials not hard to find, into several volumes; but in that case, it would not be the handbook intended for regular daily use by pastors and people. The printed literature, in both periodical and book form, that has been multiplied so increasingly through more than one hundred years, furnishes a storehouse so full that we can only dip into it here and there. For example:

It was not long after the establishment of the business until there were found a good many critics. There always have been many who have believed in a very literal interpretation of the rules that there should be no investments in real estate, buildings, or machinery equipment by The Book Concern; that the printing and binding should be done by contract and that all the money that otherwise would be invested in equipment should be invested in interest-bearing securities; that all the property needed for our use should be rented; that our business should be strictly on a cash basis; and that the

total capital should be in cash, or cash investment. This sentiment has been the cause of much lively debate, and those who have favored it seem to have been, through the years, men who have had no practical experience in the conduct of such a business. At the end of the century we look back upon a very greatly increased capital, growing out of increasing valuations in buildings and various forms of equipment, giving to the House a certain independence of action and ability to meet emergencies that otherwise it could not have. Some of our property has doubled several times over in value. None of it has decreased in valuation. The amount of capital stock is very much larger than it would have been without real estate investments. It is no question in the mind of the student that the dividends to the Conferences have been much larger than they could have been and that the future of The Book Concern is far more secure because of its ownership of all these valuable assets. For some years there has been no special debate upon this matter.

Another point in our history has been the debate frequently carried on, that The Book Concern should not deal in any books or publications not strictly its own; that it was organized and has been maintained to publish and distribute the publications that are strictly Methodist, authorized by the right authorities, and prosecuted to that end. Concerning this, it is necessary only to remind the reader that it all might be a very good argument if it were possible that our Methodist people should not buy or read

or be influenced by any publications or books outside those which come from Methodist presses. It would not be possible to operate The Book Concern if we printed and sold simply theological works. These must always be the true basis of the business; but publications including history and the higher grades of literature, with certain forms of fiction, as well as books on devotion and doctrine, we believe should be recognized as a part of the legitimate business of such a House. We would even choose to enlarge the present scope of our publications and go more widely into the field of general wholesome literature for the sake of our people, who will always be reading, whether the books are published by The Book Concern or by someone else.

The same thing is true of the question of selling. There are many sincere people who would keep no other stock on hand than that issued from our own presses; who believe that we should not enter into a general book business; that we should be strictly and only a denominational House. It seems to us that this is a species of egotism which we cannot afford. We are in a world composed of many sorts of people who make many different demands upon us for their intellectual life. If such a plan should be carried out, we have no question that a great shrinkage would almost immediately result in the business of the House. It is not overliberality which would caution us that if we wish to maintain the intellectual grip upon our people which insures

the increase of our growth and influence, we must have a continually enlarging scope for this work.

It was not long after the establishment of the branch of The Book Concern at Cincinnati until a remarkable new growth in the church, both in its membership and in its quality as a book-reading and book-buying community, was noticed. From 1820 to 1839 the Cincinnati House was simply a branch of the New York House and was subject to it in every way. Agents took their orders as to conducting the business from the Agents at New York. The growth, however, was so great that it became almost an impossibility to carry out that plan; so in 1839, under the authorization of the General Conference of 1836, the Cincinnati branch was separately incorporated under the name "The Western Methodist Book Concern." Thereafter, it became independent, in all its management, of the parent House at New York.

There was a large company of German immigrants who were colonizing in the great Middle West. Among these German people a remarkable work of religious revival began in 1837. The increase of business, created by the demand of these people for the proper reading material, made it necessary to supply such literature in the German tongue. This was another reason for the separate incorporation of the Cincinnati House. The year of this incorporation—1839—was the year in which the Christian Apologist was started in Cincinnati, with Dr. William Nast as its editor. Doctor Nast

came into and continued a remarkable leadership, remaining as editor until 1892, the longest editorial service ever rendered by any of our editors.

As far back as 1816, efforts had been made to place the Book Stewardship and management of our Publishing House in the hands of laymen. It was not until 1872, however, that this change was finally made. Since that time, there has been no distinction between clergy and laity in the management of the business, only special adaptation and ability being sought.

About the same time began the debate on the elective presiding eldership, whereby the members of a Conference should elect or at least nominate these men, for the bishop's appointment. This so-called "reform" has been the subject of much debate during probably every quadrennium since 1820 and no decision ever has been reached. It is our belief that the business of publishing the best literature has been largely influenced by the presiding eldership; and that the bishops having the exclusive right of such appointment have greatly served the church in the class of men so appointed.

Following the era of growth and expansion in many ways of our publishing business, came the troublous times which resulted finally in the division of the church, this division causing long years of litigation in the courts before matters finally were settled.

To one who has studied with care the growth of the church during the years it has seemed one of the

marvels of the times that growth did not cease, although for years it was retarded. In the years from 1836 to 1860 we find that such was the skill and practical wisdom of the men who had charge of this work that it is a very creditable showing which is made. Previous to the debates which resulted in the division there had been a very great increase of sentiment concerning the establishment of new depositories—places of business—not only in the North, but in the South as well. Authority was given in 1836 for the establishment of a depository at Richmond, Virginia; another at Charleston, South Carolina; and another at Nashville, Tennessee. This was not carried out on account of the division which followed; but it is a historic fact that that General Conference authorized the establishment of a place of distributing business, wherever the presiding bishop and the Conference decided it could be; that any Conference could establish a church paper where three thousand subscribers were guaranteed. From the later standpoint of experience, we think there would have been much risk in carrying out such plans; but this was entirely hindered by the division of the church.

In another chapter we have made a brief review of the establishment of the Publishing House of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, so that in this connection we need say nothing further.

Taking the twenty-four years between 1836 and 1860, covering the troublous times that we have in mind, there was an increase in The Methodist Book

Concern and the Western Methodist Book Concern, as follows, in the capital of the two Houses, serving only the Methodist Episcopal Church:

Increase in Capital (both Houses)	$259,071
Dividends paid to annual Conferences	305,457
In payment of judgments secured against our Church by Methodist Episcopal Church, South, in settlement of the Book Concern Division	231,648
In payment of interest in settlement with that Church	33,214
In payment of the cost of the Church suit	9,559
Paid on General Conference expenses	8,081
Paid on Deficiencies in publishing certain Advocates	27,117
Paid on certain other bills, ordered by the General Conference	12,004
Paid for Bishops' salaries and traveling expenses	180,328

This shows that between 1836 and 1860, in spite of the troublesome years, the total earnings of the business in that time amounted to $1,171,584. We have presented these figures in so much detail to show that The Book Concern never lost its hold upon our people.

It will not be possible, in the space we have, to present all the history of The Book Concern; and indeed, for our purpose, it is not necessary. We think it will be satisfactory to group some leading facts and figures which will answer the purpose of this discussion. Beginning with 1860, the capital of the Concern had been very greatly reduced by the paying off of the cost of the suit with the Methodist

Episcopal Church South, and also the payment of all the claims, outside of the regular Book Concern business, which was demanded for our Publishing House. It must be remembered that this period, beginning with 1860, witnessed the cutting off by the Civil War of all the Southern trade, which had been heretofore a part of the business; and that the severity of the times which followed, resulted in the restriction of the sale of books and periodicals, all over the country. The city of Cincinnati, where the Western House was located, was so close to the border line that during the years of the war the business was interrupted, and often imperiled; and yet, the figures show that there was a rapid rallying from all of these embarrassments within a very few years after the close of the Civil War.

The time then came for investments in real estate. We could not go on with our present program without investing in buildings that would be adequate for our work. We were obliged to purchase a small plant in Saint Louis and one in San Francisco and to make a very great change in location and expense in New York; the old business House at 200 Mulberry Street had grown too small. The General Conference of 1860 authorized the Agents—with the concurrence of the Book Committee—to purchase or secure a new store for the accommodation of the increasing business. This was not done for some years, owing to the losses created by the war; and the authorization was increased from time to time, until in 1868 a commission was appointed

with the power to spend, in New York, any sum not above $1,000,000 for the use of The Book Concern and the Missionary Society. The Missionary Society proceeded to put into this new property one fourth of its cost, thus securing business headquarters for all the missionary work then in operation in this country. The total expense of the purchase at 805 Broadway, New York, was $900,000. Certain readjustments and repairs brought the total to $1,000,000. This proved a good investment, for the annual rental of space which could be let to other tenants, more than paid the 7 per cent interest on the purchase price of the entire property.

It was also found, in the same quadrennium, that it was necessary to change the location at Cincinnati; and a property purchase was made at West Fourth Street. This was soon covered by new buildings which were entirely adequate to care for the business for years to come.

In October of 1871 occurred the great loss to The Book Concern by the fire which swept Chicago. The loss to our property and its contents amounted to $100,000. It had been, supposedly, fully insured; but the fire which destroyed the property occupying many hundreds of acres in Chicago destroyed the credits and balances of the insurance companies. We lost not only the $100,000 in property, but probably another $100,000 in the suspension of trade, through that territory, until the House was on its feet again; and also the great loss by our inability to collect the insurance. The great

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companies were bankrupt by the fire; and this created a serious condition in the business. It was at this time that contributions—gifts—were asked of the entire church, as had been done at the time of the New York fire, in 1836, and about $90,000 was contributed for the rebuilding of the business in Chicago. All these conditions did not contribute to the outward growth and prosperity of the Concern; but in a wonderful way it rallied, and that within a very short term of years.

Within another year came the rather alarming reports that were gaining access to various parts of the country, and were received with more or less credence, of the irregularities and losses in the management of the New York House. We do not need to enter upon this history further than to say that after the most careful investigation and scrutiny on the part of the General Conference, which followed, and the critical examination made by the various commissions of the church, the men who were in charge and were held responsible for the management of The Book Concern were exonerated entirely from any part in these irregularities. Nevertheless, there had been mismanagement; and it was some years before the whole matter was atoned for and practically forgotten. It is only our desire to make our historic statement as complete as seems necessary that has persuaded us that any reference to this incident was needed; but we believe the chief value in the story is that it illustrates the nature and unworthiness of the criticism of the outside world,

of which The Book Concern always has had its share. The story itself now has no claim to consideration by the public. We should remember too that the period of which we are now speaking covered the years of the great financial panic, beginning in 1873. The business stress was unusually great. A large number of long-established publishing houses were obliged to close up their business; literary publications seemed to be first and most largely affected of any form of business.

To illustrate how strong a hold The Book Concern had upon our people, we give a few figures, by quadrenniums, calling attention to the fact that during these years a large number of the most costly standard, useful works appeared that have ever come to our presses. The following tables will show the capital and sales of the two Houses from 1860 to 1889; the latter year being the end of the first century of The Book Concern organization:

Quadrennium	N. Y. Capital	Cin. Capital	N. Y. Sales	Cin. Sales	N. Y. Profits	Cin. Profits
1860–64	$539,689	$287,694	$1,507,872	$1,287,694	$205,285	$75,007
1864–68	590,571	460,374	2,505,199	2,399,508	164,735	163,053
1868–72	1,055,179	422,599	2,426,840	2,801,677	362,094	115,065
1872–76	1,013,687	503,285	3,215,612	2,830,096	219,512	80,636
1876–80	1,080,568	474,178	3,415,616	2,675,125	101,798	14,619
1880–84	1,202,593	412,233	3,534,595	2,920,891	281,022	101,092
1884–88	1,653,197	739,109	3,674,109	2,903,415	516,594	342,460

CHAPTER V

THE EARLY PLANS OF BOOK CONCERN BUSINESS

We have heretofore quoted what should be now repeated as the proper topic for the ensuing chapter. We have before us the original *Discipline* of 1789, which records the organization of The Book Concern; and the section upon which the work was based is as follows:

"As it has been frequently recommended by the preachers and people that such books as are wanted be printed in this country, we therefore propose, first: That the advice of the Conference shall be desired concerning any valuable impression and their consent be obtained before any steps be taken for the printing thereof. Second: That the profits of the books, after all the necessary expenses are defrayed, shall be applied according to the direction of the Conference toward the College, the Preachers' Fund, the deficiencies of preachers' salaries, the distant missions, or the debts of our churches."

Upon this statement as a basis of operation, The Book Concern was organized. Books had been printed, as is known, in previous years. It was now proposed to organize the work after a plan to create responsibility for the character of the books

printed and to place the entire business in responsible hands, for its execution.

It was at this time that John Dickins, one of the most effective and successful of preachers, was appointed "Book Steward"—following the name used by the Wesleyan Church in England—and was given charge of the entire business. He was at that time, as previously indicated, stationed at a church in Philadelphia. The Conference which appointed him was having its meeting in New York; but, as at that time there was no thought that the Book Steward should give up the work of a preacher, he simply began the new business in the city of his residence.

In the *Discipline* of 1791 we find the same statement as that quoted above, with the exception that the section concerning the disposition of profits reads as follows: "That the profits of the books, after all the necessary expenses are defrayed, shall be applied as the Bishop and Council shall direct;" from which it would appear that thus early the question of profits was filled with uncertainty. It became clear that enough money, out of the receipts of book sales, should be retained by the management to pay all bills and maintain the proper credit; that whatever was left after they had been cared for was referred to the bishop and his council for proper disposition. Thus the new business learned early to conform itself to the conditions of profit and loss in the business.

We turn to the *Discipline* of 1798—because it is

not possible for us to quote from each separate edition—and we find the following, under the general heading:

"OF THE PRINTING OF BOOKS AND THE APPLICATION OF THE PROFITS ARISING THEREFROM

1. Q. Who is employed to manage the printing business?
   A. John Dickins.

2. Q. What allowances shall be paid him annually for his services?
   A. $200.00 for a dwelling house and for a book room;
   80.00 for a boy;
   53 and 1/3 dollars for firewood;
   330.00 to clothe and feed himself, his wife and his children.
   666 and 1/3 dollars, in all.

3. Q. What powers shall be granted him?
   A. 1. To regulate the publications, according to the state of the finances.
   2. To complain to the yearly Conference if any preachers shall neglect to make due payment for books.

4. Q. What sum of money shall be allowed distressed preachers, out of the book fund, till the next General Conference?
   A. 266 and 1/3 dollars per annum.

5. Q. How is the money mentioned above for the benefit of distressed preachers to be drawn out of the book fund?

A. By the Bishop, according to the united judgment of himself and the yearly Conferences.

6. Q. In what manner shall the accounts of the General Book Steward be examined?

A. The Philadelphia Conference shall, from year to year, appoint a committee who shall examine quarterly his receipts and disbursements and other accounts.

7. Q. What mode shall be struck out for the recovery of bad or suspected book debts?

A. Let every yearly Conference appoint a committee or committees for the examination of the accounts of the traveling Book Stewards in their respective districts. Let every Presiding Elder and every preacher who has the oversight of a circuit do everything in their power to recover all the debts in their circuit or district, and also all books which may remain in the hands of persons who shall have resigned or been withdrawn from the office of a traveling Book Steward.

8. Q. Shall any drafts be made on the book fund before all its debts are discharged?

A. There shall be none, till the debts are discharged, except in the case of distressed traveling preachers.

9. Q. What directions shall be given, concerning the regulation of our press?

A. The General Book Steward shall print no books or tracts of any kind without the consent of a Bishop and two thirds of the Philadelphia Conference.

10. Q. Will the Conference recommend and engage to promote the publication of a magazine entitled, "The Methodist Magazine," which shall consist of compilations from the British magazines and of original accounts of the experience of pious persons and shall be published in monthly numbers?

A. The Conference will recommend such a magazine and desire that it may be printed."

As we have stated elsewhere in this history the magazine referred to was begun and continued in circulation for two years, or until the death of Mr. Dickins. He operated the business upon the plan thus outlined. All this time he was a faithful pastor, but it seems that his chief joy was in the printing and circulation of books and tracts.

The *Discipline* of 1801—in which a section is entitled as follows: "Of the Printing and Circulation of Books and the Profits Arising Therefrom" —has a further explanation of the plan under which the business was carried on after the death of Mr. Dickins. This *Discipline* of 1801 enters into a very clear statement of the rules of that time:

"Ezekiel Cooper is appointed the Superintendent of The Book Concern who shall have authority to regulate the publications and all other parts of the business according to the state of the finances, from time to time. It shall be his duty to inform the Annual Conferences if any of the preachers or private members of the Society neglect to make due payment. He may publish any books or tracts which

at any time may be approved of, or recommended by the majority of an Annual Conference; providing such books or tracts be also approved of by the Book Committee, which shall be appointed by the Philadelphia Annual Conference. He may reprint any book or tract which has once been approved and published by us, when in his judgment the same ought to be reprinted. Let his accounts and books be examined by the Philadelphia Conference at the time of the sitting of said Conference.

"It shall be the duty of every Presiding Elder, where no Book Steward is appointed, to see that his district be fully supplied with books. He is to order such books as are wanted and to give direction to us how same are to be sent; and he is to take the oversight of all our books sent into his district, and to account with the Superintendent for the same. He is to have the books distributed among the several circuits in his district and is to keep an account with each preacher who receives or sells the books; and is to receive the money and forward it to the Superintendent. When a Presiding Elder is removed he is to make full settlement for all books sold or remaining in his district and is also to make transfer to his successor of all the books and accounts left with the preachers in the district, the amount of which shall go to his credit and pass to the debit of his successor.

"It shall be the duty of every preacher who has the charge of a circuit to see that his circuit be duly supplied with books and to take charge of all

the books which are sent to him from time to time, or which may be in his circuit; and he is to account with the Presiding Elder for the same. When a preacher leaves his circuit, he must settle with the Presiding Elder for all the books he has disposed of. He is also to make out an inventory of all that are remaining unsold, which shall be collected at one place; the amount of which shall go to his credit and be transferred to his successor, who is to take charge of same. If the preacher who has charge of the circuit be negligent in dispersing the books, the Presiding Elder shall commit the charge of the books to another.

"The Superintendent of the book business may, from time to time, supply the preachers with books in those circuits which are adjacent or convenient to Philadelphia; and settle with them for same. In such cases the regulations respecting the Presiding Elders are not to apply.

"In all cases where books are sent to distant places, the Presiding Elders or preachers shall be allowed to put a small additional price on such books as will best bear it, in order to pay the expense of freight or carriage; but the addition must not be more than what is necessary to defray such expense.

"Every Annual Conference shall appoint a committee or committees to examine the accounts of the Presiding Elders, preachers, and Book Stewards in their respective districts or circuits. Every Presiding Elder, minister, and preacher shall do everything in his power to recover all debts due to the

Concern and also all the books belonging to the Concern, which may remain in the hands of any person within their districts or circuits. If any preacher or member be indebted to the Book Concern and refuse to make payment or to come to just settlement, let him be dealt with for a breach of trust and such effectual measures be adopted for the recovery of such debts as shall be agreeable to the direction of the Annual Conferences respectively.

"There shall be no drafts made upon the Book Concern till its debts are discharged and a sufficient capital provided for carrying on the business; after which the profits arising from the books shall be regularly paid to the chartered fund, and be applied with the annual income of the funded stock to the support of the distressed traveling preachers and their families, the widows and orphans of preachers, etc.

"It shall be the duty of the preacher or preachers who travel with any of the Bishops, if he or they be authorized by the Superintendent of the Book Concern, to act as an agent in the settlement of accounts, collecting money, or in transacting any business belonging to the Book Concern.

"In case of the death, dismission, or resignation of the Superintendent, during the recess of the General Conference, the Philadelphia Conference shall have power to appoint another Superintendent till the next General Conference.

"No traveling preacher shall print or circulate any books or pamphlets without the consent of the

Annual Conference to which he belongs, except as an agent of the Superintendent of the Book Concern.

"The form of *Discipline* shall be printed by itself and the Bishops' explanatory notes by themselves; but in such a manner that the notes may be conveniently bound up with the form of *Discipline;* and every Presiding Elder, preacher, or other person who has the charge of the books may send for as many copies of the form as he pleases, with or without the notes."

We grant that this is a lengthy quotation; but it is also good history and relates to a certain part of the story of The Book Concern which is not generally known, as few people of the present time, who are working under the newer plans by which our literature is sold, have any understanding of the older forms.

It may be well to say, here, that these rules of the business were always carried on under the objections of the preachers. It seemed impossible to persuade some men to be methodical and careful in their sale of the books. All agreed in the value of the books to the people. The plan provided for the best education of the church, in the most vital things relating to their religious life, that had been arranged for any church in this country. It does not appear that anyone ever objected to the value of the printed book or tract to our people; but it came to be a common thing that many of the books were retained within the bounds of circuits year after year;

handled until they were old and soiled and second-hand in value, and could not be returned easily to headquarters; and, if returned, could not be counted at anything like the face value that they carried, when they were sent out. This created an inevitable loss in assets year by year; and as time went on the great amount of unsold books of this class became an actual menace to the prosperity of the Concern.

We have recently gone through the original ledger kept by the Cincinnati House from 1820 to 1828, inclusive. Upon examination, we find the fact that nearly every account was kept with the presiding elders and not with the circuit preachers; and that it was quite the common thing for these presiding elders, who were among our great pioneer preachers, to have charged against them on personal account from $1,000 to $2,000 per year; and as it was often difficult for these presiding elders to get returns from their preachers and people in order to make properly the right returns to The Book Concern, that also became a matter of much objection among these men. As a matter of history, we know that this plan of sending out books for sale obtained until the whole plan was abolished by the General Conference of 1836; and it was very much of a task to bring the business back to a more substantial basis, where its stock on hand—which entered into its capital as a legitimate part of it—was all located at the center of publication and not everywhere among the people in the field. Within

a few years the entire matter was so readjusted that there never has been objection since to the rule adopted at that time, that "We will hereafter send out no books on consignment." Following this, the financial condition of The Book Concern was immediately improved.

CHAPTER VI

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES—AGENTS OF THE EASTERN HOUSE

John Dickins

John Dickins was a foremost minister, not only of Methodism in that age, but of America. In natural endowment, in scholarship and devotion, he was unexcelled. Men of his own time and those of succeeding years agree that he was among the chief workmen who laid the foundations of our church in this country. He was born and educated in the city of London. He came to America and in 1774 was converted and became a Methodist. Very soon he was engaged in the work of an evangelist, where he had remarkable success. He was in the work of the Methodist itinerancy, chiefly in the South, and was admitted to the Conference in 1777, at a date when the entire force of Methodist preachers in the whole country numbered but thirty-five men. In 1783 he was sent to New York, when that city contained but sixty Methodists after a year's service on his part. When he left New York, in 1789, there were six hundred members. In 1789 he was sent to Philadelphia, where the remainder of his life was spent.

The story of the founding of The Methodist Book

Concern is familiar. This was the work of John Dickins, who maintained during the years of his service the work, also of a pastor. He was not only the founder of the publishing business but was its organizing genius, and in the nine years of his work as Book Steward he brought this work to a degree of efficiency which made it not only his enduring monument but the beginning of an incalculable amount of good in the world.

When he began as the Book Steward the work was entirely unformed. Publications which the young church needed were not considered salable by any publishers or booksellers; and so they were not issued in this country. But it was important that the aid of the press should be brought to the support of the rising church. Before there was a Book Concern, Dickins took the responsibility of publishing a Methodist Hymn Book. When he became the Book Steward, in 1789, on the urgent request of the Conference, that body assumed the publication of the Hymn Book. Mr. Dickins then issued what was known as "The Arminian Magazine"; but after two volumes were completed this was suspended for lack of support. Had it lived, without doubt it would be to us, to-day, a great treasury of facts illustrative of men and work of that time. This was followed, in 1796, by another periodical called "The Methodist Magazine." This magazine was suspended at the time of Dickins' death and was not renewed for twenty years. Since 1818 it has been continuously published.

They were great men who founded this church. They worked in the midst of indifference and opposition. The great religious system known as Methodism was not shaped by small men but by giants. The men of courage who, in the face of great difficulty, and possessed of but slender human resources, founded and built with rare wisdom and unfailing strength, proved their greatness by their work. Among these great men Dickins was a foremost leader.

In 1797 a Book Committee was constituted to aid the Agent, or Book Steward, in his work. This Committee was made up of men of the Philadelphia Conference. Dickins attended personally to all details of the business, however. The printing, binding, and distribution of the various publications were all done under his personal instruction. We have the record that in the last four years of his service he published for the church one hundred and fourteen thousand copies of books and pamphlets; making all contracts, editing all books, reading proof, attending to sales, keeping the accounts, and superintending the entire business. Ezekiel Cooper, the successor of Mr. Dickins as Book Steward, has this to say of him: "The whole of his actions, public and private, have appeared to be bent on the glory of God, the honor and promotion of religion, the good of man. Trace him through his temporal business and we see conscientious rectitude in all his dealings. Find him where you would, you would discover in him a man professing and practicing

religion—not to be thwarted, by any consideration, from the regular discharge of his duty."

Ezekiel Cooper

The best statement of the work of Mr. Cooper as the successor of John Dickins is probably in a quotation from his own writing:

"When I engaged in this Concern, in the spring of 1799, the whole amount of clear capital stock, including debts and all manner of property, was not more than four thousand dollars. When Mr. Dickins began the business, nine years before his death, there were but forty-three thousand membership and one hundred and ninety-six preachers in the Church. He had to travel an unexplored way. The business was created by slow and laborious processes. Dickins had no experience as a publisher; but the small capital he left was but a small part of the fruit of the enterprise: The Book Concern had been established and was in successful operation; one hundred and fourteen thousand copies of books and pamphlets, issued the last four years of his work, had probably reached a half million readers and had furnished moral stimulus and religious inspiration to both preachers and people. They had explained the doctrines of the new church and had built up the life of the denomination.

"When I took charge of the Book Concern, in 1799, there were over 61,000 membership and 272 preachers; and the Church was entering on a period of rapid growth. For this coming multitude, Dickins

had prepared a means of instruction by the printed page."

And we add that Cooper, by his devotion, skill, and energy, proved to be the man to make this great opportunity a reality. Cooper says that he engaged in the business with great reluctance and only on the condition that he should be allowed to pay its debts and secure a sufficient working capital before being called upon to turn over any profits of the business for other purposes. This was agreed to, and Cooper began his work on those conditions. He established the credit of The Book Concern by becoming personally responsible for contracts made, thus inspiring confidence in his business associates. He was often obliged to advance his own money to pay bills; and he was many months in intense application and great fatigue in getting the business under way. Such was his success that when he retired, in 1808, the business had paid all its debts and showed a capital of forty-five thousand dollars. This was an increase of eleven hundred per cent in nine years. The church had grown in membership from 61,000 in 1799 to 150,000 in 1808; and the preachers from 272 to 540 in number.

The record shows that at the General Conference of 1804 Mr. Cooper himself made the motion which limited the term of service of the Book Steward to eight years; and this was the rule until 1836. Cooper's success had been so outstanding and significant that he would have been continued indefinitely in The Book Concern but for his desire to

return to pastoral work. It would have been wiser for him and better for The Book Concern had he remained as the Book Steward. Later years proved that it is better not to cut off effective service by a man adapted and trained for a special work by any time limit.

In 1804 The Book Concern was moved from Philadelphia to New York. Certain friction had arisen between the two churches in Philadelphia, and the Book Steward was pastor of one of them. The details we need not enter upon; but the outcome was that a decision was reached that it was best for The Book Concern to remove to another city; from which followed its new location at New York.

It seems fitting that a history of so important an enterprise as The Book Concern, an enterprise which has contributed so largely to the growth and welfare of the church, should pay at least a small tribute to the men who, through the years, guided that enterprise from so small a beginning, through all the fluctuations of the business life of the country to its later condition of influence and power.

We have studied the administration of John Dickins, the first of these men, and find that it was both skillful and successful. We have no knowledge of whereunto the enterprise would have grown in his hands, if it had not been for what seems to us his untimely death; and it seems like a special Providence that such a man as Ezekiel Cooper should have been chosen to succeed him, in carrying on this work, for the whole situation was much more

critical in the days of its beginning than in any later years.

Cooper was not only a great business man, but it seems that he was gifted in all the elements of leadership. No man in our history has been regarded as being a living encyclopædia of all sorts of useful knowledge as was Cooper. Best of all, he was an ardent student of the Bible—its doctrines and the creeds of the churches built upon it; he was a great theologian; a powerful preacher and debater, leading in all the measures of the various sessions of the General Conference.

At the beginning of his work in The Book Concern, it was a bankrupt institution. It had the loyal support of a few Methodist preachers and of a church which numbered only a few thousands in its membership. Its credit was scattered far and wide. It had no working capital. And Cooper himself had to become responsible for contracts that had to be made for printing and material in order to get the work done. Somehow he was able to supply every demand thus made upon him. At the end of the first quadrennium, in 1804, he reported assets of $27,000; and in 1808, $45,000 and no debts. No man in the history of the church has done a greater work.

Always Cooper's heart had been in the work of the pastorate; and the General Conference of 1808, under his own motion and leadership in the discussion which followed, limited the term of the Book Steward, as he was then called, to eight years. This

ended his administration, which we all now believe should have been continued.

John Wilson

John Wilson, Ezekiel Cooper's successor, was born in England. He served as a Methodist preacher in that country for several years before coming to America in 1793. He seems to have been the possessor of accurate scholarship and was always an earnest student. He is said to have been very happy in his use of the English language. These characteristics made him, in the judgment of others, well adapted to the charge of The Book Concern. A man of good business training, he was with all the rest an excellent accountant. He was the first of the junior Agents who were elected as assistants in the management of the business. His work began in 1804 under Ezekiel Cooper. When Mr. Cooper's term expired, in 1808, he very naturally became the principal Agent. As such, his efficiency was proved by the prosperity of the business; but he served only two years, as he died in 1810.

Daniel Hitt

John Wilson was followed by his assistant, Daniel Hitt. His ministry had begun in 1790. He entered The Book Concern as assistant Agent in 1808. He had had a peculiar training and was for some years the special friend and traveling companion of Bishop Asbury. At the death of Wilson in 1810 he became

the principal Agent or Steward and was continued in that position until 1816.

It is said of Mr. Hitt that he possessed a vigorous mind and that he had broad and practical views of all church enterprises. Superior in judgment and always recognized as a man of conservative business methods, his administration was counted as systematic and safe; but it was not, in all respects, in the judgment of his brethren, sufficiently aggressive, especially in financial management. He was always more of the preacher than the business man. He was grave of manner; it was said of him that he was Quakerlike in appearance and costume, always wearing single-breasted coat, broad hat, and long hair. After leaving The Book Concern he lived an honored and useful life until his death in 1825.

Thomas Ware

Daniel Hitt was followed in the management of The Book Concern by Thomas Ware. He served as assistant Agent from 1812 until 1816. Ware was a farmer's boy, with very meager educational advantages. He was a soldier in the Revolutionary War and afterward planned to be a sailor, but the preaching and singing of the Methodists changed his life. He was converted and immediately began a ministry of more than fifty years. His work was largely on the frontier in Tennessee and North Carolina. He was a quiet man; faithful, industrious, self-poised, successful. He came into The Book Concern and its administration at an embarrassing

time in its history. The institution was not growing, and its future was uncertain. After serving four years the testimony is that he left the affairs of the Concern better than he found them. The work was not congenial, however; and he thought it wise to return to pastoral relations. In this later work he continued until 1842.

Joshua Soule

The next Book Steward was Joshua Soule. He was distinctly one of the notable men of his time, in the early history of the church. He was born in Maine; began preaching at seventeen, and continued in the ministry nearly seventy years. He was said to be a man of great ability and that his greatest power was always manifested in the pulpit, that he was a preacher of great popularity, and that he was a much greater man in intellect than most of his fellow workers. This brought him growing influence in the counsels of the church. He was the author of the plan adopted for a delegated General Conference, the first of which was held in 1812. For his many great qualities he was chosen as the Agent of The Book Concern. He possessed the energy, the decision, and the administrative ability required in a successful manager of the growing publishing house. His work, according to the history, seems to have been met everywhere with commendation. He served but one term, however. He often expressed an opinion which doubted the pro-

priety of a minister acting as Book Agent, and in 1816 tried to open up the way for the introduction of laymen into the position, but failed in the attempt. He was elected bishop in 1820; but the General Conference had taken action favoring the election of presiding elders. This action he believed unconstitutional and declined to accept the office of bishop for that reason. He returned to the pastorate, but was reelected bishop in 1824.

The later career of Bishop Soule is well known in the church. When the great division came, in 1844, he cast his lot with the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. He was, for a long time, the senior bishop in that church and had a great part in its early history and some of its later consummations. He lived until 1867. We can but admire the strength of his convictions which made him such a leader, though we do not always follow in the conclusions which he reached. Without doubt he was one of the truly great men in the agency of The Book Concern; and had he continued longer in its service, he would have impressed himself very largely upon the life of the church.

Thomas Mason

Thomas Mason succeeded Joshua Soule in 1816. He served until the General Conference of 1824 as assistant Agent; then, as the eight-year limit had been reached, his work in this department came to an end. It was said at the time, as his work was

successful and he stood in high favor in the church, that the eight-year limit of service which had been ordained in 1808 was a mistake. As the limit was afterward removed, it did not interfere with his being elected assistant Agent for a second time. He served in all as assistant and principal Agent a total of seventeen years.

It is an historic fact that when his agency began, The Book Concern was in an embarrassed condition, but that it soon rose above it; and as during his incumbency the great fire of 1836 occurred, by which The Book Concern in New York was destroyed, his great ability rapidly overcame the embarrassment, and not only did the Concern reach its former level, but the capital was greatly increased, giving his superior executive ability an unquestioned place.

Peter P. Sandford

The next man in the office of Book Agent was Peter P. Sandford, who served from 1841 to 1844. Mr. Sandford always held a prominent position as a preacher. He was known widely in the legislation of the church and was a member of every General Conference from 1816 to 1852. He was chosen, upon the retirement of Thomas Mason in 1841, as assistant Agent of The Book Concern and served as such for three years. He then went back to the pastorate. He was a good administrator as well as a great preacher, but he was not long enough con-

tinued in the service of the Book Concern to make a large impression upon that branch of our service.

Nathan Bangs

Among the great men of our early Methodism, standing always easily among the leaders, is Nathan Bangs. He was born in Connecticut in 1778, entered the ministry in 1802, became Book Agent in 1820, serving in that work the constitutional eight years; afterward he became editor of the Christian Advocate, and, following that, missionary secretary. He gave the church a ministry of threescore years.

His talents were of a very high order. He was a versatile man in the best sense; he did many kinds of work in the church and never failed to do all kinds well, and about equally well. He was one of the first pioneer missionaries in Canada, being sent over by the authorities in this country. After returning to the United States he was first pastor, then presiding elder, then Book Agent, then editor, then author, then college president and, finally, missionary secretary. While Book Agent he was the editor of The Methodist Magazine, which developed into the Quarterly Review and which had begun its existence in 1818. When the Christian Advocate and Journal started—the first of our weekly periodicals—he furnished the larger part of the editorial matter while still Agent. After his term as Agent expired he was elected as the editor of the Christian Advocate and Journal by the General Conference. This was true of him as editor of

the Methodist Review. He was the chief founder of the Missionary Society—wrote its constitution and for years was its recording secretary, vice-president and treasurer, and then its first corresponding secretary. He was a member of twelve General Conferences and was influential in them all.

He was different from most of the Book Agents in that he did not serve an apprenticeship as junior Agent. He found The Book Concern struggling with accumulated debts, and with all possible energy he entered upon the task of enlarging the sales and more promptly making collections. He adopted the plan of increasing the indebtedness in order to adapt the publications to the people and to increase sales; and in this he proved very successful. Before his first term ended the indebtedness was cancelled and the business gave every evidence of great prosperity. He could not get the consent of the Book Committee to add a bindery and printing department to The Book Concern until he assumed the financial responsibility for the same. He added largely to the general catalogue of books—many volumes of great value to the church.

It is a part of the history of the time that when he urged the establishment of a bindery and printing department objection was very strong by the Committee. The Concern was largely in debt and there would be a great increase in the indebtedness if such a plan were carried out. Doctor Bangs insisted that it should be done. He showed how the contract system, by which all printing and bind-

ing was done, constituted a great drain upon their resources, and stated that they might as well do the work themselves and have the profit from it rather than to turn it over to other hands. It made no difference to the objectors, however. They said, "You cannot increase the indebtedness by so many thousands of dollars with our consent." When he still insisted, the Committee threatened to prosecute him, by which action he would lose his position as Agent if he persisted. The Committee then adjourned. Three months later, when the next regular meeting came, they found the bindery already in action and plans making for the installation of a printing department. When they said, "Brother Bangs, why did you disobey our orders? Why did you go in debt to such an extent?" his answer was: "I have gone into debt to get out of debt." He did go into debt, increasing very greatly the facilities for work of The Book Concern; and thus, within a little time, got out of debt by creating larger sales and larger profits, paying off all incumbrances. He had the wisest head and the most far-reaching vision of any man up to his time, in the history of The Book Concern. There never seemed to be any weakness in any work which he undertook.

He felt very greatly the need for more consecutive plans of reading and studying among our young preachers. He wrote a series of letters, published originally as we recall in the Christian Advocate and Journal, entitled "Letters to Young Ministers." These were full of wisdom, kindly advice, insistence

as to maintaining habits of study, and vital information. The letters afterward were gathered together in a little volume, under the same title; and it is said upon the best authority that the influence of that small book among the ministers resulted in the framing and putting into useful operation what has for many years been known as the Course of Study for Preachers. Nathan Bangs was the originator of the idea and a very great influence in its beginning.

It is worthy of note that Doctor Bangs saw, early in his administration, the need for a higher and more elaborate grade of books than had heretofore been published. The catalogue of publications had constantly grown, and he added to the general catalogue Clarke's *Commentaries,* a monumental work first published in England; and Benson's *Commentaries,* of practical equal value, as well as a goodly number of other volumes.

John Emory

The next Agent in line was John Emory. He was a native of Baltimore and a man of remarkably early development, well educated, and as a preacher was said to have had rare spiritual insight. He was a champion of the doctrines and faith of Methodism, and was one of the keenest of all our preachers during the early history of the church. He early came into prominence and was a member of the General Conference when only thirty years of age. He was the first fraternal delegate ever sent as our

messenger to the British Conference. He served the church as Book Agent, editor and bishop. He was junior Agent with Doctor Bangs, was enterprising, strong as an administrator, and supported Doctor Bangs' aggressive plans earnestly. When later he was made principal Agent, he then revealed an originality of method both in The Book Concern and in many new church enterprises, which made him widely known. He became a bishop at forty-four years of age and began a career of very great promise, but met with a tragical death when but forty-seven. The team of horses drawing his carriage ran away, and he was thrown from his seat and killed. Bishop Emory was a man of great industry and added to his many duties the work of preparing, as an author, several volumes of great value.

Beverly Waugh

Beverly Waugh followed John Emory in the Book Agency. In early life he had a most excellent business training and would have been a great success in a secular calling, but he entered the ministry early and this ministry covered a period of forty-nine years. He was a peculiar example of self-control. He had unusual and uniform health and it was said of him that he passed through his entire life without any interruption whatever from sickness. He lived in a very systematic way, and his frugal personal habits gave him the right to demand great regularity and economy in the administration

of The Book Concern. Every interest of the Concern increased during the years of his incumbency. The eight-year limit to the Book Agency was abolished in 1836 and Doctor Waugh doubtless would have been continued as Agent had it not been that the church at this time elected him one of its bishops. During the following years of his episcopal service he carried out the same plans of unfailing and remarkable industry, seen in his travels over the land in all kinds of conveyances excepting Pullman cars, and in his presidency of many Conferences, and his watchcare over all the system and business of the churches. His strength of character was always seen in his inflexible will. Simple and strong, faithful and persistent, he left a great impression upon the church.

George Lane

Beverly Waugh was followed by George Lane. He entered the ministry at twenty years of age, becoming at a very early date conspicuous among his brethren for his vigorous mental powers as well as for his great devotion to any part of the work assigned him. His ministry covered a goodly part of the States of New York, Pennsylvania, and Virginia. He entered the Book Agency at the General Conference of 1836 and continued in it for sixteen years. It was at a critical time in the history of The Book Concern. Many of the plans under which the machinery of the church had been operated since its organization were found to be obsolete in their

practical values. Many changes had to be made, especially in the interior management of the business. Questions of manufacture and of credit, with the establishment of the strongest credit the business possessed in all its history, was due very largely to Mr. Lane. It was during these years that the business over which he presided had its long litigation with the Church South, which created much irritation both North and South, and which finally resulted in a division of The Book Concern property. In all this trying time Mr. Lane showed rare good sense and business judgment, as well as earnest and efficient devotion to the cause as a whole. Very little criticism was ever directed toward him during these troubled years.

Charles B. Tippett

Charles B. Tippett came into the Book Agency as junior Agent, served from 1844 to 1848—but one term—and was then succeeded by Levi Scott, who after one term as Agent was elected one of the bishops of the church. Mr. Tippett was a member of the Baltimore Conference which he represented in several Conferences. He was a long-time member of the Eastern, or New York, Book Committee serving from 1852 to 1868. His total ministry covered forty-seven years. He was a man highly respected and of great ability, but owing to the shortness of his term, he did not make the impression as Book Agent which was made by men of longer service.

Levi Scott

We come, now, to Levi Scott, who occupied a large place in the work of the church for many years. He was a farmer's boy, and by no means the only one that has come to a distinguished place in the church. He began his ministry at twenty-four years of age and served the church through the long line of pastor, presiding elder, educator, Book Agent, and finally, bishop. He was a man of scholarly taste, of very accurate mental habits, said to have rare prudence and practical ability, and served every interest of The Book Concern when it needed wise counsel and patient, continued toil. Not especially celebrated in any one particular, he was yet so well rounded in his relation to all the work and interest of the church that he will always be remembered as one of our most useful and effective men.

Thomas Carlton

The next in the long line of Book Agents at New York was Thomas Carlton. He was also a farmer's son. He entered the ministry at twenty-one years of age and was able to give the church a half century of very efficient service. For a long time, while a working member of his own Conference in western New York, he was the leading pastor and presiding elder, and recognized as the Conference leader in all respects. When he was elected to the office of Book Agent he was also made the treasurer of the Missionary Society. He

was the senior Agent of The Book Concern for twenty years and it is a matter of common knowledge among students of Methodist history that The Book Concern had a phenomenal growth during the entire time of his administration. He was especially strong as a financier, and during all the years immediately preceding and following the Civil War his wisdom, good judgment, and foresight were of very great value. A man of unquestioned integrity, of strong character and of steady activity in the work of the church, these attributes have given him a large place in the annals of the church.

Zebulon Phillips

Mr. Phillips began his ministry at twenty-six. He was a member of the Troy Conference for fifty-two years, until his death; a strong, earnest, faithful minister, but always a minister, first of all. In 1852 he began as junior Agent with Doctor Carlton, the same year as that of Doctor Carlton's election. He served for four years only, and declined reelection. At the session of 1856, when he declined the Book Agency, the General Conference elected him a member of the Eastern Book Committee, where he served with efficiency for the four following years. The later years of his life were spent in the active ministry.

James Porter

One of the outstanding men in this long line of service was James Porter. He was of strictly Puri-

tan stock, born and reared in Massachusetts, becoming at twenty-two a member of the New England Conference. Our history tells us that he at once entered upon a very useful and prominent career in the ministry, occupying the leading pulpits of the church in the larger cities of New England. His great knowledge of men and affairs made him presiding elder on the Boston District at an early age. He was elected Book Agent in 1856, continuing in that work for twelve years, being associated with Doctor Carlton as his senior Agent.

Perhaps no man in this entire list of church servants has made more clear the adaptation of his ability to the task given him. He had remarkable skill in the selection of the best books for publication; he was also expert in pushing and encouraging trade. He was a great salesman, and cleared the shelves of the Concern of much of its old material. It is said of him that his addresses before the Conferences concerning the work of The Book Concern have never been excelled. He was a man of remarkable convictions and nothing could change his views on what he believed to be right. Therefore his pronounced anti-slavery sentiments were not attractive to the conservative element, especially along the Southern border; and he was not in sympathy with lay delegation, which was introduced into the church at this time. These two facts are said to explain his retirement from The Book Concern—a fact not discreditable to him. He was a great preacher, a keen debater, a leader in legislation, and

an author of merit. His books are still considered valuable contributions to Methodist literature. All phases of Methodism have had fine treatment at his hands.

John Lanahan

John Lanahan was the successor of James Porter in the Book Agency at New York. He was born in Virginia in 1816 and began his work as a minister in 1838. In 1868 he was elected Book Agent. For many years he was prominent among the forces of Methodism along the border, where he lived. It is said that during the time of the Civil War his knowledge and counsels proved valuable, at times, to the government, and probably no man for a generation past has been more influential in all matters of church legislation. He was a member of eleven successive General Conferences—a record almost without parallel; and from the beginning he was a recognized leader. His association during his Book Agency at New York was with Doctor Carlton. Certain friction arose owing to differences of opinion in the interior management of that House into the details of which we cannot enter now. There was never the slightest question upon either the integrity or great ability of Doctor Lanahan. He was a man of remarkable intellect and thorough knowledge of the history and polity of the church. He was retired from the Book Agency in 1872 and for many years continued in the management of a Methodist Book Store under the auspices of the

Baltimore Conference in the city of Baltimore, being active and effective down to old age.

Reuben Nelson

It was one of the results of the investigation at New York that it was decided by the General Conference in session in 1872 to have a new management throughout in that House. Two men new to the work in New York were elected—Reuben Nelson as senior Agent. He was a man whose ministry had been spent in New York and Pennsylvania, in the pastorate; but whose later life was that of a very successful educator. He is more remembered for his life-work as a teacher and educator than for anything else. His great effort for many years was to develop character and create strong, well-balanced Christian men and women.

His success in handling the financial problems in his educational work had much to do with his nomination as a fit man for the Book Agency; that, and his love of literature. We can well understand that he entered into a new work as Book Agent under considerable embarrassment. We have referred to the ordeal through which The Book Concern had just passed. The financial affairs of the entire country were approaching a most trying and depressing condition, all of which reached its climax in the panic of the following year. Doctor Nelson never looked back. He gave himself without any reservation to his new work, and with his colleague, also a new man in the work, preserved the reputation

of The Book Concern perfectly, and that at a time when many mercantile houses of the country were being brought to bankruptcy and many houses of long standing and prominence were stopping their engines and closing their doors. He was a man of unwearied energy and great practical wisdom, and was popular everywhere in his administration as Agent. He was strong, clear-sighted, faithful. No man has done a better work among us. He died in office in 1879, following a service of seven years.

John M. Phillips

As far back as 1816, Joshua Soule, at that time the principal Book Agent at New York, made a vigorous attempt to open the way for the election of laymen to the position of Agent of The Book Concern. Frederick Merrick, of Ohio, made the same attempt in the General Conference at Buffalo in 1860. This attempt, like the earlier one, was also unsuccessful. The business difficulties known in our church history as The Book Concern troubles, to which reference has already been made in this history, were the chief reason for a new demand in 1872. It was said that the intricate details of so large a business could not be handled as efficiently by a minister whose previous life had not been given to that work as by a trained layman who had been brought up in the House.

The right layman was found in John M. Phillips, who was at that time cashier in the Cincinnati Book Concern. While there was a growing demand for

laymen, the chief recommendation for Mr. Phillips was his great personal worth and his remarkable fitness for the work to which he was called by this General Conference. He had been in the Western House for thirty-seven years, beginning at the bottom. He had gone the whole range—office boy, mailing clerk, bookkeeper, salesman, cashier—and for many years had been trusted with the practical supervision of the business of that House; this, of course, under the direction of the Book Agents. It is likely that no one has ever had a better personal acquaintance with all the details of The Book Concern business than John M. Phillips. He seems to have been the providential man to correct the irregularities of the business in New York and bring about an entire change in the situation. He was a man of large experience, of wisdom, integrity, and, in fact, had all the qualities of a first-class business man, to which were added superior financial skill and a great fidelity and devotion to duty.

The office of assistant Agent had been done away and the two Agents in each of the Houses, East and West, had now joint authority. Mr. Phillips' colleague, Doctor Nelson, was a new man in the business and was greatly assisted by his partner. Mr. Phillips was the first layman ever appointed as an assistant secretary of the General Conference. This occurred in 1872. He was for ten years the treasurer of the Missionary Society. He was chairman of the building committee which built the present great structure at 150 Fifth Avenue, New York.

He was of invaluable service in this great enterprise, but did not see the building dedicated, as he died shortly before that event. In many ways Mr. Phillips was one of the greatest of our Book Agents.

Sandford Hunt

Doctor Hunt was the successor of Doctor Reuben Nelson in the Book Agency and was for ten years the colleague and partner of Mr. Phillips. These two men were very unlike in education, training, and business experience, as well as in disposition; but they were busy men, building up a great cause; and that fact made them a firm as congenial and harmonious as could be found. Doctor Hunt's early life was spent on the farm. We have seen in the case of other men that this was not a disadvantage. He worked his way through Allegheny College and became a member of the Genesee Conference. He came to an early place and a strong place in that body. He filled a service of about a half century as pastor, presiding elder, author, and Book Agent. As far back as 1876 he had been made a member of the Book Committee and in 1879 the Book Concern elected him Agent, to succeed Doctor Nelson.

One of the great tasks of the firm of Phillips and Hunt was to pay off the bonded debt on the property at 805 Broadway; and within a very few years the last mortgage on it was cancelled. Doctor Hunt was a very effective worker in the great enterprise of building the new structure on Fifth Avenue; and

it is said of him by a competent authority that perhaps no one has ever made a more thorough study of the original history and mission of The Book Concern, and that no one ever expressed quite so clearly the leading characteristics of the great enterprise. He had a legal mind and a business mind. In early life he studied law and later was particularly interested in the laws of religious corporations. He was a model of industry, of dignity, of simplicity, and of tireless service to the church. He died very suddenly in the opening of an annual meeting of the Book Committee in Cincinnati.

Homer Eaton

One of the most outstanding and notable men in the long list of Publishing Agents in the New York House was Homer Eaton. Born in Vermont, a type of the rugged and stalwart manhood of the Green Mountain State, and especially of the time to which he belonged, he was a fit sample of the American citizenship by means of which this country has made its greatest growth and attained its greatest strength.

As this is no place for extended biography, it is only necessary to note that he gave himself, in his early manhood, to the Christian ministry and lived and died a member of the Troy Conference. He was stalwart in his preaching and soon reached a place of strong leadership among his brethren. His service in his Conference was not only notable, but his influence soon reached outside of that territory. He was early made a member of the General Book Com-

mittee, representing his territory, and was for some years its chairman. Upon the death of John M. Phillips, Doctor Eaton was elected by the Book Committee as his successor as Book Agent at New York. For twenty-four years he continued in this office—always strong, always sure in his statements, always popular among the Conferences. At the General Conference of 1912, the new constitution of The Book Concern was adopted and provision made for a General Agent, with duties covering the entire field, the election of whom was referred to the Book Committee. The Book Committee elected Doctor Eaton as the first General Agent. He was the senior among the Agents and was entitled to such an election. It came to him too late for him to realize the plans of enlarging service which immediately opened out before him. He had served too many years in the nerve-wasting task of Publishing Agent and did not have, in his old age, sufficient strength to carry out his plans. If the General Agency had come to him ten years earlier in his career, there is no doubt of the record he would have made. As it was, he was making a good start in his work as General Supervisor when he was called away, living less than a year after his election. He died in February, 1913.

George P. Mains

George P. Mains became the successor of Sandford Hunt at the General Conference of 1896. He had been a recognized figure in the ministry in and

about New York for years and already had reached a place of recognition among his brethren. His ministry had been successful, no matter what the task given him. He was eminently fitted for his new work, with the right early training, with a careful and complete education and with the experience of years in his chosen work. He stepped into a position of assured success from the start. Doctor Mains possessed the advantage of wide scholarship and was always a lover of books; and this, when he assumed the position of adviser and helper in the planning of the issues of The Book Concern, became a matter of very great value to the administration of the House. Doctor Mains continued as Publishing Agent for twenty years. At the General Conference of 1916 he declined a reelection, expressing the conviction that he had reached an age which warranted him in leaving the strenuous work in which he had been engaged, and following out some of his cherished plans for literary work. Since that time[1] he has continued as the treasurer of the Episcopal Fund, and has been the responsible agent in bringing about a very wholesome condition in the financial problem of our episcopacy.

Doctor Mains, at the present time, is living in Pasadena, California, and is much engaged with literary work. His career in this branch of the service of the church was most honorable and his record without blot.

[1] Doctor Mains resigned the office of Treasurer of the Episcopal Fund in March, 1924.

CHAPTER VII

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES—AGENTS OF THE WESTERN HOUSE

Martin Ruter

There had been for a number of years a growing sentiment that the interests of the rapidly increasing population in the great Ohio and Mississippi Valleys could be better served and the work, therefore, better done if a distributing agency were established somewhere in the Middle West. Those familiar with the history of the settlement of the United States, have not failed to marvel at the very rapidly filling up of this great territory by settlers anxious to make homes where land was cheap and opportunities better than in the more crowded conditions of the East. These settlers were not only of American stock, from the Atlantic seaboard, but comprised many people from Canada and Great Britain, as well as many from the different countries of Continental Europe. When the branch of The Book Concern was established at Cincinnati by the General Conference of 1820 there were a few steamboats on the larger rivers. The roads used by the settlers were of the worst possible description, especially during the winter and rainy months. When books were ordered by our Western preach-

ers for their people, from New York, many hundreds of miles away, there was no certainty as to the time they would be received. Mails were uncertain and far between. It became a plain and convincing duty on the part of the leaders of the church to provide for the religious reading of the people as they had done forty or fifty years before for the people on the seaboard.

Doctor Martin Ruter was elected by the General Conference as an assistant Book Agent, assisting Doctor Nathan Bangs, in New York. There was no hesitation on the part of Doctor Ruter about assuming this new work. He had been very closely related to the itinerancy and was a wise man in every sense of the word. He was a man of profound scholarship and of great ability as an author, and had a standing as a business man. He was the publisher of the first weekly paper in the history of our church. It was issued on his own responsibility and was a small sheet, but it showed his ability; and while it did not live long, it was the undoubted forerunner of the Zion's Herald, which has been so long published in Boston.

Doctor Ruter fulfilled a ministry of thirty-eight years, the first years being given as an itinerant preacher, filling many important stations before 1820, when he undertook the new task at Cincinnati. The eight-year rule governing the work of the Agents still obtained at that time, and he laid down this work in 1828. He then became the president of Augusta College, in Kentucky, and later was

president of Allegheny College at Meadville, Pennsylvania.

It is fitting to notice that, following the years of this presidency, the lure of the pastorate was so strong that he became a missionary to Texas. This was before Texas became a part of the United States. With three or four colleagues he did a remarkable work as a missionary in helping to shape the life of the new Texas Republic. He finally died in 1838 and was buried in the State of his later work.

Aside from his work as a minister and the business Agent of The Book Concern, the versatility of Doctor Ruter may be seen in the various publications which came from his pen, such as his *Notes on Romans; Sketch of Calvin's Life and Doctrines;* his *Defense of Calvin and Calvinism; An American Primer;* an Arithmetic; a Hebrew Grammar; a Conjugation of French Verbs; a *History of the Martyrs of the Church;* and a very notable ecclesiastical history, covering the entire history of the Christian Church and used by church-history students in Methodism for many years.

As we have stated, he turned over his work as Western Book Agent in 1828 to Charles Holliday; and the succeeding and final ten years of his life were given to his college presidencies and to the very notable life as missionary on the frontier of Texas.

We have no hesitancy in expressing the opinion that the two men who, during the years of their effec-

tive ministry, exercised a greater influence and did more to build up the cause they served than any others were the two Book Agents, Nathan Bangs and Martin Ruter. They were great in every way in which they can be considered.

Charles Holliday

We do not have a very extensive knowledge of the early life of Mr. Holliday, except that we know he was brought up a Presbyterian. At the age of twenty-two he united with the Methodist Episcopal Church and was soon after licensed to preach. That was in 1797. It is embarrassing to know so little of a man whose work was evidently of the same high type as that of the men who came before him and after him. For the first four years of his term he served alone as the single Agent, as Doctor Ruter had been before him; but at the commencement of his second term the General Conference gave him a helper. This helper was known throughout the years following, until 1872, as an assistant Agent. From 1832 to 1872, or for forty years, it was believed that the best form of service was to give one man the larger responsibility in the publishing work and to appoint another to be his assistant in all the necessary work of the agency.

There have been, until recently, a number of men who remembered Mr. Holliday well and always spoke of him as an able preacher, a very courteous gentleman, and a man of good business qualifications.

John Flavel Wright

Mr. Holliday was succeeded as Book Agent in the work at Cincinnati, by John Flavel Wright. Mr. Wright was a native of North Carolina. He was converted, in his boyhood, and licensed to preach at nineteen; and shortly after that was admitted to the Virginia Conference. Later, he came further West and was elected Book Agent in 1832, at which time he was a member of the Ohio Conference, serving in its regular work. He served as Book Agent from 1832 until 1844. His work went on until 1861, when he became, in his old age, a chaplain of the First Kentucky Regiment, which was raised in and near Cincinnati. Field duty proved rather too severe for him at his advanced age and he was retired to Cincinnati and completed his term of service as chaplain in the military hospitals of that city.

Doctor Wright's benignant face and gentle manner are recalled by thousands of present-day Methodists in the city where he lived. There is no blot on his record as a Publishing Agent. In 1836 he became the senior Agent; and the General Conference of that year gave him an assistant, as the work again had grown too heavy for the one Agent. That assistant was Leroy Swormstedt.

Leroy Swormstedt

As assistant Agent, Leroy Swormstedt served the church at the Cincinnati House for eight years. Fol-

lowing that term as assistant, he served as senior Agent for sixteen years—a total of twenty-four years. He always had the hearty approval of the church, for his work and his life in all parts of his service always commended him to those about him. He was born in Maryland. He came to Cincinnati in a very early day—1817—and was elected to the Book Agency from the Ohio Conference. It is said of him that he was very energetic as a business man, and was sometimes apparently severe in his dealings with the preachers whose accounts were overdue; but that he really had a tender heart and a benevolent and hospitable spirit toward all men. He was very dignified in the pulpit, but exceedingly sociable in his intercourse with the world.

In the twenty-four years which he gave to the Book Agency he developed a consistently cumulative influence; and no man in our history has conserved the larger interests of our publishing work in a better way. His life was a volume known and read of all men.

John T. Mitchell

During Doctor Swormstedt's administration, which, as already stated, covered a period of twenty-four years, he had three assistants. The first of these was John T. Mitchell. Mr. Mitchell served the Book Concern from 1844 to 1848. Like so many others who served, he was a Virginian by birth. He began his ministry in Ohio, but shortly

afterward became a member of the Illinois Conference. There was a universal feeling that, while Mr. Mitchell did good work as an Agent of The Book Concern, he was not so fully at home in the work, but that the ministry was his proper place. He was an exceedingly forceful and instructive man in the pulpit. The greater part of what is said in the histories concerning his work has reference to his great power as a preacher. There is little that is told us in the histories of the details of the business as they were carried out in those years. We do know, however, that the work went on and that the business grew and increased.

John H. Power

Succeeding Mr. Mitchell as assistant Agent to Doctor Swormstedt came John H. Power. First, it is always said of him that he was a doctrinal preacher of great force; that he could hold the interest of his audiences in the years of his prime for two hours in discussions of the great verities of our faith. He was a Kentuckian by birth and began his ministry in that State, transferring to Ohio in 1824. He was prominent in the Northern Ohio Conference as a member at the time of his election as Book Agent. One of his sons became a minister in the Iowa Conference; another son was a distinguished physician during his life; and a younger son had served with high judicial honors within the bounds of Iowa.

Adam Poe

The third man who came to the assistance of the Rev. Leroy Swormstedt was Adam Poe, a man, who, like his chief, became famous in the capacity of Book Agent. Doctor Poe was born in Ohio in 1804 and, like some others of the list, was reared a Presbyterian. While in his youth he united with the Methodist Episcopal Church, owing to differences of doctrinal belief, and was admitted into the itinerancy of the Ohio Conference in 1827. Beginning with 1852 he served for sixteen years as Book Agent; the first eight years as assistant to Leroy Swormstedt and the last eight years as the principal, with Luke Hitchcock. He left the work of The Book Concern in 1868 and died during the same summer.

Doctor Poe was a strong character, assertive as an administrator and a thoroughly equipped workman. It was of great help to him that he had, during his last eight years of work, the splendid help of Luke Hitchcock, the assistant Agent.

Luke Hitchcock

Luke Hitchcock has been considered as a man of great force of character and of very great insight. He was born in New York in 1813; became first a member of the Oneida Conference; transferred West to the Rock River Conference, from which he was elected Agent in 1860. To this Conference he returned after his successful labors as

Book Agent for twenty years. During the final years of his life he served the Chicago District as presiding elder in a notable way; and also as corresponding secretary of the City Church Extension Society. He died in the year 1898.

We look back upon the very large development of the Western Book Concern during Doctor Hitchcock's administration not so much, possibly, because of his work, as because the time had come when certain great buildings, both of factory and administrative type, needed to be built. His foresight and judgment assisted in that work.

John M. Walden

The office of assistant Agent having been abolished previous to this time, John M. Walden was elected Book Agent in 1868 and served until 1884, a total of sixteen years. At this time he was elected a bishop, and as bishop he fulfilled a long and honorable service, dying, in the retired relation, in 1914.

Doctor Walden was born in 1831 in the vicinity of Cincinnati. He became a newspaper reporter at an early age and finally an editor, doing his editorial work for the most part in the State of Kansas during the years of anti-slavery conflict. He became a member of the Cincinnati Conference in 1858, and so, after ten years of varied service, during which time he organized the Freedmen's Aid Society of the Church—following the Civil War—he entered into the work of Book Agent while still in his youth. For twelve years he was associated in the joint man-

agement of the Western Book Concern with Doctor Hitchcock, who laid down his task in 1880. Doctor Walden served for another quadrennium.

John M. Walden will always be known as one of the church's greatest statisticians. He was a man given to detail in his work and in his knowledge of the work committed to him such as can be said of very few men. It will be observed that during the years of Doctor Walden's administration occurred the most notable years of the reconstruction of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the South and of the reorganization and development indicating the greatest growth of our colored membership. The business of The Book Concern increased steadily, normally; but the sales were small, comparatively. The profits were likewise small; and the burdens on the Concern during those years were heavy. Reference to some preceding years will call the reader's mind to the conflict, in the late forties and early fifties, between our church and our sister church which had separated and was completing and maintaining a separate organization, that as a result of litigation the Methodist Episcopal Church was sentenced, in the United States Supreme Court, to pay over to the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, a large sum of money as the rightful share of the funds of The Book Concern, on a per capita basis of the business which was operated from New York and also from Cincinnati; the Eastern and Western Houses each being held responsible for a proper division of its own share of assets.

The Civil War came on, with all the forms of hard times, following. It was a season of financial as well as religious distress. Arrangements had to be made, during those hard years, for a great bond issue; the bonds had to be sold and the money had to be earned to pay the interest, and to retire the bonds when due. The question is sometimes asked by those not familiar with the history why it was that during the years of Doctor Walden's administration as Agent no dividends were declared or sent out to the Conferences as the profits of the business of those years. Let it always be remembered that the answer to the question is in the fact that during the years referred to, the Publishing Agents, of whom Doctor Walden seemed to stand in a chief place, were charged with the duty, first, of paying the debts created by the division of the church, which debts were coming to be held sacred by our entire body of believers. This work was accomplished. The debt was happily paid; the burden was happily removed. The total amount was $282,000, and when it was paid the church sprang again into a new growth.

During these years also, as well as in some years earlier and later, the burden of the claim of the Bishops' Annual Expense Fund was laid upon The Book Concern. Whatever was lacking, in a system of collection not very complete, was paid by The Book Concern; and the same is true of the deficit in the expenses of the General Conferences, as they were held. Many times other charges were made

against the funds of the Concern, which perhaps was well enough at the time, and needed to be done in some such way, but which, with our larger comprehension, would not be tolerated to-day.

William Page Stowe

The Rev. William Page Stowe came into The Book Concern as one of its Publishing Agents in 1880, four years before the same service ended on the part of Doctor Walden. Doctor Stowe was a native of New Hampshire and was born in 1831. Coming to the West in his youth, he became a member of the Wisconsin Conference in 1858; and because of his outstanding effectiveness in his work as an itinerant—filling the positions which came to the itinerant in his regular work, in a very competent fashion—he was selected as having the business ability necessary in a Publishing Agent. He made his home, for the most part, in Chicago, which developed greatly as a business center for our work, owing largely to his presence in charge of that work.

Doctor Stowe had the confidence of the entire church. Always a busy man, always cheerful and optimistic, always engaged in the working out of new plans in the service, he served for twelve years in the Agency and died in 1896.

Earl Cranston

Doctor Walden's successor in the Book Agency was Earl Cranston. Doctor Cranston was a native of Ohio. He began his ministry in the Ohio Con-

ference and served for short terms in the Minnesota Conference, the Illinois Conference, and the Colorado Conference. While a member of the latter, he was elected as the successor of Dr. John M. Walden and served as Agent for twelve years—from 1884 to 1896. At the General Conference of 1896 he was elected a bishop.

The administration of Doctor Cranston, as Book Agent, was remarkable in several particulars. There was a largely increased list of publications in book form; a large list of books for common people, young people, Sunday schools, and others, growing out of the increased demand of our readers. And we may date from this time also the importation and publication through the land of the best Bibles for students and for ministers: books like the Collins Bible of Glasgow; the Oxford Bible of London; the Nelson Bible of Scotland; the Bagster Bible from London; also, a very large imported line of Bibles and other books in the German tongue—a business now almost entirely out of date, owing to the change in the bulk of immigration from that country.

It is not our plan to follow Doctor Cranston's history during his service as a bishop, except that it will be proper to say that he did full and effective service both in foreign lands and in the home field. On account of the age limit established by the General Conference he was retired from effective service in 1916; but that has by no means brought a stop to the effectiveness of his continued service. He is, at the present time, well up in the eighties, but

is a very good adviser still. There is no more wide-awake Methodist preacher in the entire list. His home, near Cincinnati, is still the center of the best and highest thought. Our wish for Bishop Cranston is that he may live for many years.

Lewis Curts

Lewis Curts was elected Agent of the Book Concern in 1892 and served for eight years. He was born in Ohio in 1848. His father was a minister who moved at an early date to the bounds of the Rock River Conference, where the son grew up and received his early training, finally graduating at Cornell College, in Iowa. He became a member of the Rock River Conference in 1870 and served some of its best pastorates and districts until 1892, when he was elected a Book Agent.

Doctor Curts was a notable preacher. He was also notable as a money-raiser. There was always large demand for him for service at church dedications and for money-raising for general purposes. He became well and widely known in this general service of the church.

He was a man of vigor in his administration and was the author of many changes in The Book Concern policy. Doctor Curts was retired from the Publishing Agency in 1900 and afterward served for several years as pastor in the churches of the Rock River Conference. He is still living, at the date of this writing, in Long Beach, California. Having received, some years ago, a stroke of paral-

ysis, he has suffered a most peculiar—not to say amazing—decline in health, until at the present time he is helpless in all that relates to his personal care or his ability to help himself in any way. A man of great physical vigor by nature, a man who, under ordinary conditions, should have lived to a great old age, he is suffering this gradual but certain decline—an object of the greatest sympathy to all his many friends who knew him in his prime and have earnestly wished for his recovery.

Henry C. Jennings

The successor to Earl Cranston as Agent of the Western Book Concern, upon his election to the episcopacy by the General Conference of 1896, was Henry C. Jennings of the Minnesota Conference, at that time serving as a presiding elder. He was a native of Illinois but had spent almost his entire life in the Northwest. For his first quadrennium his home was in Chicago. In 1900 he was elected senior Agent of the Western House and took up his residence in Cincinnati, that being the headquarters of the business. Here he lived for sixteen years, having oversight of the business in the West.

Upon the death of the first General Agent, Homer Eaton, in 1913, he was elected by the Book Committee to take his place in the General Agency; and he served in that capacity until 1920—seven years—when a final break in his health occurred, caused by the overstrain of many years, and he was

obliged to retire from active service. He now resides in Portland, Oregon.

[During the twenty-four years of his term as Publishing Agent Doctor Jennings rendered service of the utmost importance and of the highest value to The Book Concern and to Methodism as a whole. His knowledge of the Church was cyclopedic and he had the rare ability of sensing the religious and intellectual needs of preachers and people. This, together with a forceful personality, combined to make his term of service epochal in the history of our publishing interests.—D. G. D.]

Samuel H. Pye

Samuel H. Pye was born in Ohio, near Cincinnati, in 1845. He spent the greater part of his earlier life in and near Cincinnati. When a very young man he became an employee of the Western Methodist Book Concern and took the most of the steps which faithful servants take in their personal development in Houses of this kind. Mr. Pye grew in the estimate of The Book Concern and in the absolute confidence bestowed upon him by his superiors in the work; and thus he toiled in various departments of The Book Concern and finally, as one of our most expert accountants, until he was sent by Doctor Walden, then the Agent, to take charge as manager at Saint Louis. For twenty years following that time his name was identified with the publishing work of our church in the region centering in and about Saint Louis.

A man whose mind was trained to attend carefully to detail, willing to take the trouble to do all his work in a faithful manner, taking the greatest pains to have all accounts and every related matter in his work in perfect order, he had confidence in himself and therefore his superiors always had confidence in him. Nothing was more stable, nothing more certain of results than the business of the Saint Louis depository during the management of Mr. Pye.

On the retirement of Doctor Curts, in the year 1900, Mr. Pye was made a candidate for the place, and at the General Conference of that year, held in Chicago, he was elected as an Agent of the House. It is only fair to say that the history of this House will be a little more accurate if it is stated here that Mr. Pye took great delight and had great pride in being known as one of the laymen of the church as he had no relation nor affiliation with the clerical forces of the church. It had come to pass that the laity finally had made their way, by equal representation, into the General Conference. Mr. Pye was undoubtedly the most thoroughly equipped man among the laity who could be persuaded to become a candidate; so he was elected as a tribute to his own personality and strength; and also to the fact that he was one of the chief laymen of the church, able to cope with such a task as was given to him at that time. His work consisted, for the most part, in the management of the Chicago House. He made that city his home, and pushed the work to the

utmost. He retired in 1904 and spent several years in editorial work. He died recently in Florida.

Edwin R. Graham

The direct successor of Mr. Pye was Edwin R. Graham, likewise a layman, who also took up his residence in Chicago, where he remained for twelve years. At the close of that time, under the reorganization of The Book Concern staff in 1916, he became the manager of the New York House and General Director of The Book Concern business in the East. Mr. Graham, like so many others of this long list, was a native of Ohio. His father was an honored and effective member of the North Ohio Conference. Mr. Graham received his education at the Baldwin-Wallace College which was operated by the Conference in which his father served. He graduated at an early age and became, almost immediately, identified with the book publishing business. While still a very young man he was in the employ of The Book Concern at Cincinnati; and during his years there he organized and put upon its feet the subscription book department, which for many years was so successful a part of the business, changing, as so many other changes were made, when the demand for subscription books began to fall away.

Mr. Graham had a large experience as a traveler for other publishing houses, so that no one ever had the opportunity or improved it more effectively, in our entire list of workmen, than did he, concern-

ing the general book business of this wide land. In the year 1904, while still in the service of the great house of Houghton, Mifflin Company of Boston, he was elected as one of the Agents of the Western Book Concern, as the successor to Mr. Samuel H. Pye. He went on in this service during the remainder of his life—and it was a long term, from 1904 to 1921. Always busy, industrious, full of the care of his work, anxious to see it through, overworking ofttimes, he was finally overcome by chronic disease and died in 1921.

John H. Race

After the death of Dr. Homer Eaton, John H. Race, of Chattanooga, Tennessee, was elected by the Book Committee in April, 1913, to the position of Publishing Agent and assigned to duty at Cincinnati, our chief House in the West; taking the place of Henry C. Jennings who was made General Agent at that time.

Doctor Race is a native of Pennsylvania and a graduate of Princeton University. He was a pastor and teacher in his native State for a few years and had served for fifteen years as president of Chattanooga University. From such a work of outstanding importance, which developed in him a high administrative skill, he came into the service of The Book Concern and has successfully carried out its plans and increased its effectiveness in every department. Doctor Race has had great success in promoting social life and welfare work in The Book

Concern. In this he has been the greatest leader during all the history of the House.

Following the death of Edwin R. Graham in February, 1921, the Book Committee decided not to fill his place by a new election; but left the administrative work in the hands of the two remaining Agents, John H. Race and Robert H. Hughes, who managed the business till 1924.

Robert H. Hughes

Robert Hugh Hughes, who came into the office in 1920, was born in Wisconsin, but removed to Oregon a number of years ago. After some time engaged in business, he became the business manager of the Pacific Christian Advocate. He continued in this work from 1906 to 1911. Upon the death of the editor, Dr. D. L. Rader, in the latter year, Mr. Hughes was elected by the Book Committee as editor of the Pacific Christian Advocate and was reelected by the General Conferences of 1912 and 1916. Upon the retirement of H. C. Jennings from the Publishing Agency Mr. Hughes was elected as one of the Agents.

During the quadrennium in which he served Mr. Hughes was resident Agent in charge at Chicago, and Supervising Agent of all the depositories, besides having general charge of the advertising and circulation department of The Book Concern.

In 1924 the General Conference elected three Publishing Agents—John H. Race, reelected.

George C. Douglass, who served as Chairman of the General Conference Commission for 1924, and who had been a successful pastor and District Superintendent in the Troy Conference; O. G. Markham, a layman, who since his graduation from Baldwin University has been engaged in educational work and at the time of his election was Dean of Baker University and one of the Secretaries of the General Conference. Dr. Race will reside in New York; Dr. Douglass in Cincinnati, and Dr. Markham in Chicago.

CHAPTER VIII

THE BOOK COMMITTEE

It has often been stated, especially in recent years, that a more comprehensive title could be given to the very important general commission created quadrennially by the General Conference, which became the executive advisers in the general management of The Book Concern; but the name, "The Book Committee," has continued and is not now likely to be changed.

One of the early necessities of The Book Concern management became apparent in the creation of the Book Committee, organized to exercise a special function in giving oversight in the intervals between the General Conference sessions and in carrying out the directions of the General Conference, with regard to the general work of publication. At first it seemed that The Book Concern was located in the city of Philadelphia because the Agent who was elected in 1789—the Rev. John Dickins—was stationed as a pastor in that city at that time. There seems to have been no other reason for its location. The necessity for such a committee was all the more a certainty, since the Agent in charge of the business was also, for a good many years, a pastor in charge of a local church. So it was believed that the committee of advisers and helpers known as the Book Committee

should be located in the Philadelphia Conference, in order to be near at hand, ready for service.

The object in the appointment of this Committee was to provide for close inspection of the business; to make a quarterly audit of the accounts of the Agents; to have regular times of counsel with the Agents, as to the publication of books; and to make regular reports to the Annual and General Conferences. Our records of the history and work of the Book Committee are not perfect and complete—some have been lost—but enough has been retained to show how earnestly all the members of the Committee worked for the common good.

In 1804, when The Book Concern was removed to New York, the selection of the Book Committee was referred, not to the Philadelphia Conference any longer, but to the New York Conference; and when the Western Book Concern was established, in 1820, a like Committee, with like duties and functions, was authorized by the General Conference of that date; and this Committee was selected from members of the Ohio Conference, which Conference at that time surrounded the city of Cincinnati, the headquarters of the Western branch. The two Book Committees continued to do their work and were appointed in this way up to and including the General Conference of 1844; that is, the Committee for the New York House was composed of members of the New York Conference and the Committee for the Cincinnati House was composed of members of the Ohio Conference.

Up to the year 1828 the senior Book Agent was also the official editor of all the publications issued by the Concern, except the Christian Advocate and Journal; and in 1828 the editor of the Christian Advocate and Journal became also the editor of all books, tracts, and other publications, and at the same time was made an ex officio member of the Book Committee.

Up to 1832 the Book Committee in the East consisted of five members, appointed annually by the New York Conference; but in 1832 the number at New York was increased from five to seven. In 1836 another change was made at New York: the Committee there was made to consist of the Methodist pastors stationed in the city, the editors, the presiding elder of the New York District, and the corresponding secretary of the Missionary Society. This plan was not long after disapproved by the pastors themselves; it was proved that it resulted in appointments that were sometimes made without consulting the personal fitness of the man appointed as to business ability and understanding of the general work, etc. These appointments had been made without considering the amount of time and service that pastors could not well give. In 1848 the General Conference ceased to delegate the appointment of this committee to the New York and Ohio Conferences, and since that time both committees have been appointed directly by the General Conference at each quadrennial session.

Under the present arrangement, which became a

law in 1912, the members of the Book Committee are nominated to the General Conference by the delegates from each of the General Conference districts. The General Conference now has a plan of trusting the delegates from these districts to a careful canvass as to fitness; and without objection, in recent years, their nominations have been confirmed without debate. In 1864 the number of members of the Book Committee in New York was increased to eight men, and in Cincinnati to twelve. This change came about through the representation in the business of each of the houses growing out of the number of General Conference districts, which later became equalized. In 1868 a more radical change was made in the make-up of the Book Committee. Since 1820 there had been two Committees. It was determined, in 1868, to have thenceforth but one Committee and this Committee was to consist of one traveling preacher from each one of The Book Concern districts; and to this Committee was given the general superintendency of both Concerns. It was claimed that this change was made in the interest of unity and harmony in the general management. The two Concerns were to be regarded as the common property of the whole church. It was therefore advisable to conduct the two Houses in such a manner that they should not be, or seem to be, rival institutions.

In 1872 another change took place. It may be concluded, with reason, that this change probably grew out of what was known for many years as

"The Book Concern troubles" of that time, in New York. The number of General Conference districts was reduced from fifteen to twelve, and one representative was nominated from each district. (Later, the number of General Conference districts was increased to fifteen, with a like increase in Committee members.) Besides these district members, three members were chosen from New York or its vicinity and three from Cincinnati or its vicinity—these chosen by the General Conference—making the total number of members of the Book Committee eighteen. With the growth of the church and the wider settlement of the country and the large increase in the number of annual Conferences, certain other changes have been made. There are now, in the Committee, fifteen district members, covering the entire country; and five members of the New York Local Committee and five in the Cincinnati Local Committee, making a total committee membership now of twenty-five. Instead of what was formerly two Committees, one having its work in the East and the other in the West, there is now but one General Committee, having a joint authority in the general work of the Book Committee business.

Owing to the friction created by difficulties in connection with the management in the New York house the General Conference of 1872 passed a resolution expressing its unwillingness to reelect any of the members of the Book Committee who were serving during the previous quadrennium, and also

expressing dissent from the election of any Book Agent of the New York House to continue in office after having served during those years. At this time the General Conference instructed the Committee of eighteen to organize out of its members an Eastern and a Western section. These two sections represented and cared for the interests of the two Houses until the plan was outgrown and a later arrangement—which unified into one House the two Houses—came into use; so that the Eastern and Western sections do not now exist, although for a considerable number of years they performed most valuable work in the management of the two Houses. These sections were expected to meet semiannually and did so for the first quadrennium. This was found to be taxing the members for time, and The Book Concern itself with more expense than was needful to the management of its business. This could be learned only by experiment, and thus these regular semiannual meetings were discontinued. In the later years of the existence of the Eastern and Western sections they fell into the practice of having one meeting per year, and that on the day preceding the annual meeting of the General Book Committee.

Then followed another change. The Book Committee itself was too widely scattered to meet often; the Eastern and Western sections could meet only as representatives of their own Houses; and out of this grew the organization of what has long been known as the Local Committees—three men from

New York or its vicinity and three from Cincinnati or its vicinity. A certain amount of official work—especially in matters of advice and consultation with the Book Agents—was turned over to the Local Committees. The six men in the two Local Committees are regular members of the Book Committee and have the same function in the General Annual Meetings, but the added advantage of the wider information which is gathered in the closer inspection of the business throughout the twelve months of the year. They are supposed to meet monthly and at such meetings to examine into all the transactions of the month preceding, keeping a record of their proceedings to be submitted to the Annual Meeting of the General Book Committee. We shall discover, when we come to the story of the unification of the New York and Cincinnati Houses into one House, with the same geographical disposition of Committee members as formerly, that the Local Committees have within recent years been given what is really the work—as they meet in joint session—of a General Executive Committee, taking the place hitherto occupied by the sections and meeting as often as is necessary, on the call of the chairman of the Book Committee.

The General Conference of 1924 took another advance step when it consolidated the former Local Committees at Cincinnati and New York into one Executive Committee with five members from New York and the territory contiguous thereto and three each from Cincinnati and Chicago and the con-

tiguous territory. The Chairman of the Book Committee is also a member of the Executive Committee with voice and vote in all its proceedings.

It would appear that the General Conference of 1872 did not plan for the creation of a legislative Committee, but simply one for inspection and auditing; one that could be in frequent touch with The Book Concern management, and thus able to guard against all improper business methods; watching over the accuracy of the keeping of accounts; and in some way which seemed to succeed, thus keeping the church assured of the wise management of its Agents and the sound financial standing of its publishing Houses. There is no question of the great value of the organization and work of the Local Committees. The Agents, under special circumstances, have frequently called them to serve in wider and more important relations, no doubt to the immense advantage of The Book Concern. From the first of their organization they have been a notable body of men. They are usually laymen of large business interests. They have given their ability and standing, their known fidelity to trust, and their practical efficiency—not to be excelled by any—which has given wide confidence to the business control of our publishing work. It is anticipating a little to make this notation and yet this, probably, is where it should be made: When the new plan of unification of the two Houses—East and West—into one House was determined upon at the General Conference of 1912, the personnel

of the members of the Local Committees was changed from three in each of the Committees—who were all laymen—to five in each, of whom at least two should be ministers. It was believed that a closer and more direct relation of the Local Committee to our publishing business—first by added members in the Committee and then by closer relations to the preachers, who, after all, are the great buyers of our publications, would be a wholesome thing. No doubt such a result has come to pass.

For many years the business year of The Book Concern in New York closed June 30 and that of Cincinnati, October 31. As a sort of first step in unity the New York House some years ago changed its date for closing its year to October 31 also. When unification was established the business year closed with the calendar year; and since that time, 1912, we have been saved the confusion of these different dates by opening and closing our business year with the regular calendar. When the change was made to October 31 it made necessary the changing of the date of the annual meeting of the Book Committee. It requires many weeks of careful and accurate work to prepare the annual reports in the counting rooms of the various Houses, so that it was understood that the annual meeting of the Book Committee could not be held until the second week of February; it being understood that the time between November 1 and the later date was required to get together and in proper shape all the figures of the previous year in the work of the House.

When the unification of the two houses became a fact and the closing of the business year came with December 31, then the third Wednesday of April was fixed as the date of the annual meeting of the General Book Committee. These historic facts will account for the different changes that have been made within recent years in these dates.

To the Book Committee is given the work, in the interim of General Conferences, of transacting any business which the General Conference refers to it, to be attended to between its own sessions. That is, it is given the power to fill vacancies in membership in its own body; to supervise all publishing interests of the church in a general way; to examine carefully and by means of an expert auditor and accountant into the financial condition of The Book Concern each year; to receive the reports of the Agents concerning the annual business; and it is also given authority, whenever the Book Committee believes it to be for the best interests of the Book Concern and the church, to close depositories that are not returning satisfactory results. It can authorize, also, the sale of any real estate when the business requires it; to make changes of location in Book Concern business buildings. It may investigate the official conduct of an Agent or editor and suspend him for cause. The entire structure of the Book Committee and its peculiar work has been so thoroughly worked out by the General Conferences and published in the book of *Discipline* as to really need no further explanations here.

Members of the Book Committee

The Book Concern was organized in 1789. We have no record that anyone was made officially a member of a committee to assist the Book Steward, John Dickins, in doing his work for the first quadrennium. It was found, however, especially as it continued to be a rule, that the burden of a pastoral charge and the work of carrying on the detail of The Book Concern was too heavy for one man to take the entire responsibility, so the Book Committee was first appointed regularly in 1797. It will be remembered that the Concern at that time was located in Philadelphia, and that, under the rule adopted, the Committee consisted of ministers in and around that city. We list them as follows:

1792 (Experimental Committee)
John Dickins, Henry Willis, Thomas Haskins; and the preachers who were at that time stationed in Philadelphia; John Dickins being chairman of the first Book Committee and the Agent in charge of The Book Concern itself.

1797 A change was made in the Committee: Mr. Dickins died about that time and Ezekiel Cooper took his place in the Committee and as chairman of the same. Serving with him were Thomas Ware, John McClaskey, Christopher Spry, William Lanahan, Richard Swain, Solomon Sharp, and Charles Cavendar.

We have no further record of the members of the Book Committee in New York up to the General Conference of 1848, which was the date of reorganization of The Book Concern after the division of the Church between the North and the South.

At this time the territory of the church was divided into Book Committee districts and one man was appointed from each district as a member of this Committee, so that in 1848 we have the record for the New York Committee, as follows:

1848 New York—John A. Collins, J. Holdich, D. Fillmore, A. D. Sargent, Z. Phillips, N. Rounds, T. Carlton.

Cincinnati—G. W. Walker, L. B. Gurley, E. H. Pilcher, E. G. Wood, G. M. Berwick, Peter Cartwright, Hooper Crews.

1852 New York—S. Allen, M. Crow, G. Gary, G. Peck, J. Porter, T. J. Thompson, Charles B. Tippett.

Cincinnati—G. W. Walker, J. M. Trimble, J. H. Power, W. H. Goode, R. Sapp, Peter Cartwright, L. W. Berry.

1856 New York—Benjamin Griffin, Isaac Park, T. J. Thompson, Charles B. Tippett, Z. Phillips, John McClintock, Richard S. Rust.

Cincinnati—John T. Mitchell, Edward Thomson, James M. Jamison, F. C. Holliday, W. H. Collins, W. C. Smith, Peter Cartwright.

1860 New York—M. D'C. Crawford, William H. Pillsbury, Samuel Y. Monroe, Charles B. Tippett, Gardner Baker, George Peck, John Coit.

Cincinnati—J. M. Trimble, John T. Mitchell, E. C. Gavitt, John Kizer, O. V. Lemon, W. E. Bigelow, Peter Cartwright, Richard Haney, Thomas E. Corkhill, B. F. Crary, Samuel Huffman.

1864 New York—M. D'C. Crawford, Charles F. Allen, Andes Bullard, Joseph Castle, Charles B. Tippett, Barnes M. Hall, Daniel W. Bristol, F. G. Hibbard, William Hunter.

Cincinnati—B. N. Spahr, William Young, Henry Whiteman, J. W. Mellender, John A. Smith, Francis B. Bangs, James R. Cherrington, Richard

Haney, Jacob G. Dimmitt, Samuel C. Thomas, Samuel Huffman, George L. Mulfinger.

1868 At this time the two Committees are united into one, consisting of fifteen members, as follows:
Cyrus Brooks, I. S. Bingham, B. F. Rawlins, M. L. Vernon, George W. Woodruff, C. S. VanCleve, James Erwin, J. F. Kennedy, F. A. Blades, Jacob Rothweiler, H. Bannister, J. H. Moore, Henry Slicer, James Pike, George W. Maltby.

Chairman: Cyrus Brooks.
Secretary: Isaac S. Bingham.

1872 During the quadrennium beginning at this date, the list of district members, covering the entire Church, was as follows:
M. J. Talbot, I. D. King, F. G. Hibbard, John Williams, Alexander Martin, O. V. Lemon, William R. Fayle, William H. Hunter, W. Brush, B. R. Bonner, M. Prichard, C. W. Loeber.
Eastern Local Committee: James H. Taft, C. C. North, George F. Ferry.
Western Local Committee: Amos Shinkle, J. P. Kilbreth, R. A. W. Bruehl.

Chairman: William H. Hunter.
Secretary: F. G. Hibbard.

1876 District Members: Ami Prince, J. B. Graw, Sandford Hunt, Thompson Mitchell, L. C. Matlack, F. C. Holliday, William Brush, John L. Smith, W. P. Stowe, William Prentice, William B. Slaughter, William Koeneke.
Eastern Local Committee: James H. Taft, G. H. Ferry, J. B. Cornell.
Western Local Committee: Amos Shinkle, R. A. W. Bruehl, C. W. Rowland.

Chairman: John L. Smith.
Secretary: L. C. Matlack.

1880 District Members: C. A. Clark, Homer Eaton, I. S. Bingham, W. J. Paxson, Leroy A. Belt, C. O.

Fisher, Clement Studebaker, P. J. Gillett, David C. John, F. S. Beggs, John B. Hammond, William Schreiner.

Eastern Local Committee: J. H. Taft, J. B. Cornell, Clinton B. Fisk.

Western Local Committee: Amos Shinkle, R. A. W. Bruehl, Edward Sargent.

Chairman: Homer Eaton.

1884 District Members: C. J. Clark, Homer Eaton, W. H. Olin, Thomas M. Boyle, W. F. Whitlock, E. W. S. Peck, Clement Studebaker, D. F. Barnes, J. C. W. Coxe, A. E. P. Albert, John G. Thompson, John A. Reitz, Thomas Sinex.

Eastern Local Committee: J. B. Cornell,* Clinton B. Fisk, William Hoyt.

Western Local Committee: Amos Shinkle, R. A. W. Bruehl, Richard Dymond.

Chairman: Amos Shinkle.

Secretary: C. J. Clark.

1888 District Members: G. S. Chadbourne, P. C. Lounsbury, L. C. Queal, H. H. Moore, W. F. Whitlock, E. W. S. Peck, Clement Studebaker, C. D. Truesdell, T. M'K. Stuart, D. H. Moore,† I. B. Scott, W. H. Webster, C. A. Loeber, W. S. Harrington.

Eastern Local Committee: Clinton B. Fisk,† William Hoyt, Ezra B. Tuttle.

Western Local Committee: Amos Shinkle, R. A. W. Bruehl, Richard Dymond.

Chairman: Amos Shinkle.

Secretaries: D. H. Moore,
G. S. Chadbourne.

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*J. B. Cornell died within the quadrennium.

† D. H. Moore resigned February, 1890, and accepted election as editor of the Western Christian Advocate. N. A. Chamberlin was elected in his stead and G. S. Chadbourne became secretary. General Fisk died in January, 1891. E. L. Fancher was elected in his stead a member of the committee.

1892 District Members: A. F. Chase, A. J. Palmer, L. C. Queal, E. J. Gray, W. F. Whitlock, J. E. Wilson, Clement Studebaker, M. A. Head, J. R. Creighton, N. A. Chamberlin, T. B. Sweet, W. R. R. Duncan, H. A. Salzer, Justus Greely.

Eastern Local Committee: William Hoyt, E. B. Tuttle, E. L. Fancher.

Western Local Committee: A. Shinkle,* R. A. W. Bruehl,* Richard Dymond.

Chairman: W. F. Whitlock.
Secretary: E. J. Gray.

1896 District Members: S. O. Benton, Henry Spellmeyer, C. C. Wilbor, D. S. Hammond, W. F. Whitlock, J. E. Wilson, G. O. Robinson, O. P. Miller, S. W. Trousdale, D. L. Rader, H. Reed, H. Swan, H. A. Salzer, G. M. Booth.

Eastern Local Committee: E. B. Tuttle, J. E. Andrus, T. J. Preston.

Western Local Committee: Richard Dymond, J. N. Gamble, R. T. Miller.

Chairman: W. F. Whitlock.
Secretary: S. O. Benton.

1900 District Members: A. T. Cass, Henry Spellmeyer, C. C. Wilbor, W. L. McDowell, W. F. Whitlock, J. E. Wilson, H. J. Talbot,† O. P. Miller, J. E. Farmer, D. L. Rader,† Hanford Crawford, G. G. Logan, H. A. Salzer, G. F. Bovard.

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* A. Shinkle died November, 1892; R. A. W. Bruehl died June, 1894. J. N. Gamble succeeded to the place of Mr. Shinkle and R. T. Miller succeeded to that of R. A. W. Bruehl. In 1893 W. F. Whitlock succeeded Amos Shinkle as Chairman of the General Committee. At the end of the quadrennium, the officers were as given.

† In February, 1902, H. J. Talbot and D. L. Rader having been transferred beyond the boundaries of the districts they represented, resigned. E. B. Rawls was elected in the place of the former and Robert A. Carnine in place of the latter.

Eastern Local Committee: E. B. Tuttle, J. E. Andrus, T. J. Preston.

Western Local Committee: Richard Dymond, J. N. Gamble, R. T. Miller.

Chairman: W. F. Whitlock.

Secretary: W. L. McDowell.

1904 In 1904 the list of the Book Committee was given by districts represented, with the Local Committees listed separately: A. T. Cass, C. S. Wing, C. C. Wilbor, A. S. Mowbray, W. F. Whitlock, J. A. Patten, W. H. Logan, Hanford Crawford, O. P. Miller, J. F. Harmon, C. E. Bacon, J. E. Farmer, H. A. Salzer, R. V. Watt.

Local Committees:

New York—E. B. Tuttle, J. E. Andrus, J. W. Pearsall.

Cincinnati—Richard Dymond, J. N. Gamble, R. T. Miller.

Chairman: W. F. Whitlock.

Secretary: A. S. Mowbray.

1908 Silas Peirce, C. S. Wing, J. G. Shepherd, A. S. Mowbray, W. F. Whitlock, J. A. Patten, W. H. Logan, O. P. Miller, J. F. Harmon, C. E. Bacon, D. W. Springer, W. E. Bletsch, R. V. Watt, W. W. Van Dusen.

Local Committees:

New York—E. B. Tuttle, J. E. Andrus, J. W. Pearsall, J. Edgar Leaycraft, G. F. Washburn.

Cincinnati—Richard Dymond, J. N. Gamble, R. T. Miller, J. M. Kittleman, William Christie Herron.

Chairman: W. F. Whitlock.

Secretary: A. S. Mowbray.

1912 Silas Peirce, John Handley, J. G. Shepherd, W. F. Conner, R. T. Stevenson, J. A. Patten, M. S. Davage, Hanford Crawford, H. M. Havener, Joe Bell, C. E. Bacon, J. S. Ulland, W. E. Bletsch, R. V. Watt, W. W. Van Dusen.

Local Committees:
New York—J. W. Pearsall, E. B. Tuttle, J. E. Andrus, J. E. Holmes, E. S. Tipple.
Cincinnati—R. T. Miller, E. E. Shipley, D. R. Anderson, C. M. Van Pelt, Herbert Scott.
Chairman: J. A. Patten.
Secretary: E. S. Tipple.

1916 G. C. Douglass, John Handley, William Notman, W. F. Conner, R. T. Stevenson, J. W. Fisher, M. S. Davage, J. Luther Taylor, H. M. Havener, Joe Bell, A. L. Parker, J. S. Ulland, Charles A. J. Walker, R. V. Watt, Charles C. Rarick.
Local Committees:
New York—J. W. Pearsall, Frank A. Horne, Silas Peirce, J. E. Holmes, E. S. Tipple.
Cincinnati—Jesse R. Clark, E. E. Shipley, D. R. Anderson, C. M. Van Pelt, Herbert Scott.
Chairman: W. F. Conner.
Secretary: E. S. Tipple.

1920 G. C. Douglass, D. F. Diefendorf, W. A. Notman, W. F. Conner, W. H. McMaster, T. H. Kiah, M. S. Davage, J. Luther Taylor, H. M. Havener, C. C. Hall, Judson L. Transue, J. S. Ulland, C. A. J. Walker, Frank S. Wallace, C. C. Rarick.
Local Committees:
New York—M. S. Daniels, Frank A. Horne, Silas Peirce, J. E. Holmes, E. S. Tipple.
Cincinnati—Jesse R. Clark, E. E. Shipley, Henry S. Henschen, C. M. Van Pelt, C. E. Bacon.
Chairman: W. F. Conner.
Secretary: E. S. Tipple.

The General Conference of 1924 substituted representation by Areas for the previous method of representation by General Conference Districts. At present the Committee is constituted as follows:

THE BOOK COMMITTEE

AREA	ELECTED FROM THE AREAS	TERM EXPIRES
1.	J. S. Todd (Florida)	1932
2.	J. M. Arters (Maine)	1928
3.	L. M. Potter (Genesee)	1932
4.	J. M. Emert (Holston)	1928
5.	I. B. Blackstock (Illinois)	1932
6.	W. H. McMaster (North-East Ohio)	1928
7.	G. T. Saxton (Little Rock)	1932
8.	G. M. Henderson (Colorado)	1928
9.	C. A. J. Walker (Central German)	1932
10.	H. S. Hamilton (Idaho)	1928
11.	C. C. Hall (Southern Illinois)	1932
12.	J. Luther Taylor (Kansas)	1928
13.	M. S. Davage (Upper Mississippi)	1932
14.	D. F. Diefendorf (Newark)	1928
15.	H. M. Havner (Iowa)	1932
16.	T. H. Kiah (Delaware)	1928
17.	W. F. Conner (Pittsburgh)	1932
18.	D. H. Cox (Columbia River)	1928
19.	J. S. Ulland (Northern Minnesota)	1932
20.	F. S. Wallace (Southern California)	1928
21.	M. J. Naylor (Washington)	1932

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

New York Territory—

Frank A. Horne	1928
James E. Holmes	1928
Morris S. Daniels	1928
Ezra S. Tipple	1932
W. T. Rich	1932

Cincinnati Territory—

C. M. Van Pelt	1928
Jesse R. Clark, Jr.	1928
L. M. Gatch	1932

Chicago Territory—

John L. Hillman	1928
C. E. Bacon	1932
H. S. Henschen	1932

Chairman: W. F. CONNER,
Secretary: E. S. TIPPLE.

CHAPTER IX

THE PERIODICALS OF THE BOOK CONCERN

We do not question the great value of many contributions of The Book Concern to the general good of the church, such as dividends to worn-out preachers; salaries to bishops, subsidies to provide for the continued existence of different publications, payment of the general church expenses, and so forth. There is no question of the value of the financial help all this has been; but, as a matter of fact, to be emphasized here, it bears no comparison in service to the books and periodicals which have been issued by the Methodist press for the use of Methodist people; and not only for these, but for many other readers and lovers of good literature.

The pioneer in cheap literature, in the English language, was John Wesley. He created a reading habit among our people far greater than was anticipated. The history of our church in this country has especially illustrated the fact that while multitudes have not the time—or think they have not—to read books, yet they will read papers and the church has learned that the enterprise, influence, and strength seen in the secular press have made necessary a high grade of religious journalism, to maintain a proper religious influence. The secular

press furnishes and emphasizes political and commercial news and so the religious press must furnish and emphasize news relating to religious and moral movements. That is the argument and necessary defense for the existence of the religious press, among us.

We know that the Methodist Episcopal Church began in a very small way. During the first decade or two of its existence, it had too many problems to meet and settle to attempt publishing any periodical literature. When the need for such publications was recognized, the first attempt was in the form of a magazine and not a weekly newspaper publication. No doubt this came in great part from the example of the English Wesleyans. It did its great work among the poor and middle classes who did not need a high type of literature. In 1778 Mr. Wesley began the publication of the Arminian Magazine. The name was changed and it is still called the Wesleyan Methodist Magazine. Under the request of the Conference in America, Mr. Dickins began an American issue of the English magazine in 1789, the year of the beginning of The Book Concern, and continued it for two years. It was suspended for lack of support. If its need and value had been sufficiently recognized by the young church and it had continued on through the years, without a break, it would without doubt at this time be an invaluable record of the facts and documents concerning early history of our church.

The General Conference of 1796 directed that the

publication of The Methodist Magazine should be resumed. It was accordingly published during 1797 and 1798 and then, chiefly from financial embarrassment, was again discontinued owing to the death of Mr. Dickins in this latter year. It was not renewed for some time; but in 1816 the General Conference determined upon another attempt at publishing the magazine and finally The Methodist Magazine was begun in 1818. For eight years it was the only periodical of our church, except the Youth's Instructer, which was intended for children and young people, and was begun in 1823. The Methodist Magazine was published monthly until 1828, when its title was changed to The Methodist Magazine and Quarterly Review. It was not published during the year 1829. It was begun again, under a new title, in 1830; and in 1849 it became The Methodist Quarterly Review; in 1898, the Methodist Review. Up to 1832 it was edited by the Book Agents. From 1832 the editors were as follows:

From 1832-36, Dr. Nathan Bangs, editor of the Review and all miscellaneous publications of the House; 1836-40, Samuel Luckey, editor of The Methodist Quarterly Review and the Christian Advocate and Journal; 1840-48, George Peck; 1848-56, John McClintock; 1856-84, D. D. Whedon; 1884 until his death, Daniel Curry. Daniel Wise completed the quadrennium. From 1888 to 1892, J. W. Mendenhall was the editor. He was reelected in 1892 but died during the first month of his second

term. A. B. Sanford, assistant editor, had charge until February, 1893, when William V. Kelley was elected by the Book Committee and was reelected quadrennially by the General Conference until the year 1920. Doctor Kelley at this time declined a reelection to the position of editor, after the long service of so many years, greatly to the regret of the entire church he had served so well. George Elliott was elected in 1920 and is the present incumbent of the position.

The Ladies' Repository and Gatherings of the West

A new magazine was authorized by the General Conference of 1840, to be called "The Ladies' Repository and Gatherings of the West." The first number of this magazine was issued in January, 1841. It began with thirty-two pages, was enlarged to forty-eight, then to fifty-six and finally to sixty-four pages; and was embellished with steel engravings and other illustrations. The Ladies' Repository was for many years regarded as "Queen of the Monthlies." It was also known as the art journal of America. There was nothing like it in existence as the later line of popular magazines had not yet come into being. At one time, the Ladies' Repository reached a circulation of forty thousand copies. The General Conference of 1876 agreed upon an attempt to give it a wider scope and adapt it to a more general reading public. It was therefore made over and named the National Repository.

But it was soon discovered that the new field thus attempted was already occupied by a large number of fully established monthlies and it did not succeed in making its way as it was planned. So, in 1880, it was discontinued. The editors were: In 1840, Leonidas Hamline; 1844, Edward Thomson; 1848, B. F. Teft; 1852, William C. Larabee; 1856-64, D. W. Clark; 1864-72, Isaac W. Wiley; 1872, Erastus Wentworth; 1876, Daniel Curry.

In 1852 the Book Agents at New York were directed by the General Conference to establish a monthly magazine for general popular reading. It was begun in January, 1853, and was entitled "The National Magazine." But for lack of support it was discontinued by the Agents in June, 1859. It was full of merit and deserved to live; but the call did not seem to be sufficient to support it. The editors were: 1853, Abel Stevens; 1856, James Floy.

Golden Hours

The next venture in the magazine line was in the issue of an illustrated magazine for young people, called "Golden Hours." This was begun in 1869, ordered by the General Conference of 1868 to be published by the Western Book Agents and to be issued under the direction of the editor of the Ladies' Repository. It was published for twelve years, but was discontinued finally, in 1880, for lack of sufficient support. It was about this time that the popular magazines for both old and young people began to circulate largely among all classes.

These magazines were of many kinds and qualities. It was wisely determined that Golden Hours did not meet a need of the church sufficient for its expense.

Haus und Herd

Another magazine had a career of usefulness in the German language. This was Haus und Herd, which was authorized by the General Conference of 1872. It speedily became the popular and well-known German monthly and was first issued in January, 1873. The editor, from 1872 to his death in 1895, was Henry Liebhart. He was succeeded by Franz L. Nagler who died in 1900. Doctor Nagler was followed in the work by Frederick Munz. Such were the changes caused by the recent World War that the circulation of our German periodicals in this country was very greatly cut down—a not unexpected result. Indeed, there was such shrinkage in the subscription lists of both the German weekly and the monthly that it was deemed wise finally to combine the two. Some of the characteristics of Haus und Herd were retained in the editorial management of The Christian Apologist. About 1918 the two periodicals were consolidated, and the new editor following the death of Doctor Munz, was A. J. Bucher, who is still in office.

The Christian Advocate

The first official weekly authorized by the General Conference and issued by The Book Concern

was The Christian Advocate. Its first number appeared on September 9, 1826. The Zion's Herald of Boston and The Missionary Journal of Charleston, South Carolina, both had preceded The Christian Advocate but a short time. The Charleston paper was merged into the Advocate in 1827 and the new title was the "Christian Advocate and Journal." Zion's Herald was purchased in August, 1828, and became another part of The Christian Advocate; and the new title was the "Christian Advocate and Journal, and Zion's Herald." The history is that the money which was paid for Zion's Herald was applied to the benefit of Wesleyan Academy. In 1833 "Zion's Herald" was dropped from the title and in 1870 the words "and Journal" received like treatment; so that it came back to its original name, "The Christian Advocate." Zion's Herald was organized by a private association in New England. In 1833 it was reorganized and still continues as a journal of very great influence, occupying a semiofficial relation to the church, not responsible to the General Conference, but taking care of the interests of Methodism in New England.

We have given in this statement such a brief history of the beginnings of our weekly periodicals as we believe can be relied upon, something that is of interest, and that it is well to preserve, as we are now nearing the one hundredth anniversary of our weekly periodical journalism.

The fist editor of The Christian Advocate was a layman, Barber Badger. He came from the edi-

torship of Zion's Herald. He did not claim or make for himself a position of extended influence, for during his administration it seems to be an accurate statement that the senior Book Agent, Doctor Bangs, generally wrote the editorials. The list of editors who have served The Christian Advocate through the years is a list of notable men. When Nathan Bangs completed his work as Book Agent in 1828 he was elected editor. In 1832, J. P. Durbin; 1836, Samuel Luckey; 1840-48, Thomas E. Bond; 1848, George Peck; 1852, Thomas E. Bond; 1856, Abel Stevens; 1860, Edward Thomson; 1864-76, Daniel Curry; 1876, C. H. Fowler; 1880, J. M. Buckley. Doctor Buckley fulfilled a notable career, holding the editorship until 1912. During his administration, the paper came to be recognized as the leader of Methodist journalism. Years and infirmities increasing, at the General Conference of 1912 Doctor Buckley asked to be relieved from the editorship, and George P. Eckman was elected in his place. Doctor Eckman served for three years, resigning the editorship in 1915 and returning to the pastorate; serving in that work until his death a few years later. James R. Joy was elected by the Book Committee, at its session in 1915, to take the place of Doctor Eckman. He is still in service.

Pittsburgh Christian Advocate

The Pittsburgh Christian Advocate was organized in 1833. It is a semiofficial paper, controlled by a publishing committee from the four adjoining

Conferences. It has always had an honorable career and a circulation almost the largest of the entire list. We give the list of editors, who are elected by the General Conference:

In 1833, Charles Elliott; 1836, William H. Hunter; 1840, Charles Cook; 1844-52, William H. Hunter; 1852, Homer J. Clark; 1856, Isaac M. Baird; 1860-72, H. S. Nesbit; 1872, W. H. Hunter; 1876-84, Alfred Wheeler; 1884, C. W. Smith. After twenty-four years of editorial service, Doctor Smith was elected a bishop in 1908. The editor who followed Doctor Smith and who is still in service is John J. Wallace.

Western Christian Advocate

The Western Christian Advocate was authorized by the General Conference in 1832. It was begun in 1834 at Cincinnati and it has been continued in its publication at the Cincinnati Book Concern through all the succeeding years. The population of the great Middle West had increased so rapidly that it was agreed that this great new country needed an Advocate of its own. Through its editorial strength and the loyalty of the people it came almost immediately into a large circulation. The editors were: 1834, Thomas A. Morris (afterward bishop); 1836-48, Charles Elliott; 1848, Matthew Simpson (afterward bishop); 1852, Charles Elliott; 1856-64, Calvin Kingsley (afterward bishop); 1864, John M. Reid; 1868, S. M. Merrill (afterward bishop); 1872-84, F. S. Hoyt; 1884-99, J. H. Bay-

liss; 1889-1900, David H. Moore, who was elected bishop; 1900-1916, Levi Gilbert. The editor at present in the service is Ernest C. Wareing.

Christliche Apologete

The Christliche Apologete was begun in 1839. Its issue was decided upon by the Western Book Agents and the Western Book Committee, and in 1839 the first number was issued. It always has been published in the interest of Methodism among the German people of this country, with some circulation across the sea. The editors were: 1839-92, William Nast; 1892-1917, A. J. Nast, who resigned at the latter date. A. J. Bucher was elected to fill his place and still continues in the editorship.

Northern Christian Advocate

The Northern Christian Advocate was begun in 1844. It was first published in Auburn, New York, and in later years in Syracuse, New York. The editors have been: 1844, N. Rounds; 1848, William Hosmer; 1852-60, F. G. Hibbard; 1860, I. S. Bingham; 1864-72, D. D. Lore; 1872-92, O. H. Warren; 1892-1900, J. E. C. Sawyer. In 1900, owing to its decline in circulation, the General Conference withdrew its official support. It continued as an independent paper for several years; but was finally purchased by The Book Concern and merged into The Christian Advocate, the territory of the Advocate being thereby largely increased.

Northwestern Christian Advocate

This paper was begun in 1852 in Chicago, and is still published from that city. The same reason which made the Western Christian Advocate necessary applies to the Northwestern and to the Central also, which papers were used to serve the great and growing West and Northwest. The editors of the Northwestern were: 1852-56, J. V. Watson; 1856-68, T. M. Eddy; 1868, J. M. Reid; 1872-1901, Arthur Edwards; 1901-1908, D. D. Thompson. Mr. Thompson was a layman, trained as a journalist and peculiarly adapted to his work. He was accidentally killed in the city of Saint Louis, by an automobile. He was succeeded in the editorship by Charles M. Stuart. Doctor Stuart declined reelection in 1912 and became the president of Garrett Biblical Institute. He was succeeded by Elbert R. Zaring who in turn was succeeded, in 1924, by Dan B. Brummitt, formerly Editor of the Epworth Herald.

Central Christian Advocate

The Central Christian Advocate was begun in 1856 at Saint Louis. The editors were: 1856, Charles Brooks; 1860, Charles Elliott; 1864-72, B. F. Crary; 1872-91, B. St. James Fry; 1892-1900, Jesse Bowman Young; 1900 to 1924, C. B. Spencer.

California Christian Advocate

The California Christian Advocate was author-

ized by the General Conference of 1852 to be published in San Francisco. The editors were: 1852, S. D. Simonds; 1856-68, Eleazer Thomas; 1868-80, H. C. Benson; 1880-95, B. F. Crary; 1895-1900, W. S. Matthew. In 1900 the management of this paper was transferred to a local commission to act under the Agents of the New York House. This commission appointed F. D. Bovard editor. Up to 1904 the California Advocate had been published under the general management of the New York Book Agents. At the General Conference of 1904 The Book Concern business of the Pacific Coast was transferred to the Agents of the Western Book Concern. These Agents assumed direct control and are still in charge. Doctor Bovard continued in the editorship until 1913, when he resigned to accept the secretaryship of the Board of Home Missions and Church Extension. His successor, elected in 1913, was Francis M. Larkin who, in 1924, was succeeded by Edward P. Dennett.

Pacific Christian Advocate

The Pacific Christian Advocate, published in Portland, Oregon, was begun as an independent paper, to serve the interests of the Pacific Northwest. It was adopted officially by the General Conference in 1856. The editors have been: 1856-64, Thomas H. Pearne; 1864, Henry C. Benson; 1868-76, I. S. Dillon; 1876, John H. Acton. From 1880 to 1892 the paper was unofficial. The General Conference had withdrawn its support, but it continued

to be published. The editor elected by the General Conference in 1892 was A. N. Fisher who served until 1904. In 1904, Daniel L. Rader was elected. He died in service in 1911. From 1911 to 1920, Robert H. Hughes was the editor. In 1920 Edward Laird Mills was elected, who is still in service.

Southwestern Christian Advocate

The Southwestern Christian Advocate was for the first years operated as an independent paper, published in New Orleans, in the interest of the colored work of the church. After it was taken over by the General Conference, the editors were: 1876, H. R. Revels; 1880, J. C. Hartzell; 1884, Marshall W. Taylor; 1888, A. E. P. Albert; 1892, E. W. S. Hammond; 1896, I. B. Scott. Doctor Scott served until 1904, when he became a missionary bishop for Africa.

The Methodist Advocate Journal

Published first at Atlanta, this paper was adopted by the General Conference in 1868. The editors were: 1868, E. Q. Fuller; 1872, N. E. Cobleigh; 1876-84, E. Q. Fuller. After this the paper was discontinued. It was resurrected in later years and has been published at Athens, Tennessee. The present editor of what is known as the Methodist Advocate Journal, published as above, is J. M. Melear. This paper is the successor of the earlier one, founded at Atlanta.

The Central Christian Advocate

As previously noted, the Central Christian Advocate was established in Saint Louis in 1856. It was on the border line. The country was new, just opening up to rapid settlement to the south, west and north. The extension of slavery was the great political and social question of the time, and the territory which the "Central" proposed to serve became the great storm center of that day, on that question. Thus the paper had for some years a rather strenuous career; but during the war and, following that, during the reconstruction, it performed a great service not only to the church but to the cause of freedom. Owing to the development of the great Southwestern Empire, and in order to be nearer the center, the paper was moved to Kansas City, Missouri, in 1900, by order of the General Conference; and two nonofficial papers were consolidated with it, namely, the "Omaha Christian Advocate" and the "Rocky Mountain Christian Advocate," published at Denver. Thus the entire region westward to the Rocky Mountains was turned over to the "Central Advocate"; and part of the previous territory east of Saint Louis was released to the Advocates published at Chicago and Cincinnati.

Our Youth

It is proper to set down, in the interest of historic completeness, the story of the short-lived weekly periodical for young people which was pub-

lished in the eighties, under the title "Our Youth." This publication was officially authorized by the General Conference. It was of the highest literary and mechanical excellence, the editorial responsibility being in the hands of Doctor J. H. Vincent. It had a strange, as well as a brief history. It was full of excellencies that could not be disputed; its defects were in no case apparent; and yet, for some reason, it never seemed to find a place for itself. We have concluded that this was not from any lack in itself, but from the total lack of organization and plan, at that time, among and for the young people. Its circulation was always limited, and it was a large bill of expense, as in no year did it earn its own cost.

In 1889 the Epworth League was organized; and that story is familiar. The work of organization was pursued with great spirit, and it soon became apparent that an organ of some kind to circulate among the young people and to assist in the completion of the growing organization would be necessary. It seemed that this would be the place for "Our Youth"; and for some months the effort was made, but without success. This paper, of such great merit in itself, was finally suspended; in its place, under the authority of the Book Committee and the Western Agents, the Epworth Herald was started.

The Epworth Herald

The Epworth Herald was first issued in June,

1890. The following is the official action in the matter: "The Western Section, all members present, and the Western Agents, met in Chicago, March 5, 1890. After the most thorough consideration as to the publication of an Epworth League organ, it was resolved that the Western Agents should begin one not later than June 1, 1890. The size and price were agreed upon. The name 'Epworth Herald' was adopted; and Joseph F. Berry, of Detroit, was elected editor." The Epworth Herald at once adjusted itself to the work for which it was designed. It was managed, editorially, with great skill. Advantage was taken of the new enthusiasm so widespread and growing among our young people; and very soon its circulation had passed one hundred thousand copies per week. It began by being orthodox and enthusiastic concerning Methodist teaching and spirit—a thoroughly denominational young people's organ in every sense—and the Book Agents contributed all possible help in mechanical make-up, illustrations, and special work on the circulation. The Epworth Herald has gone steadily on until the present time, when it fills what seems a necessary place in the influential journalism of the church. And it should be added that it has adjusted itself to the various changes in the development and growth in our work among the young people.

Joseph F. Berry continued in the editorship until 1904, when he was elected a bishop. Following him in the editorial service have been Stephen J. Herben,

Dan B. Brummitt and W. E. J. Gratz, the last named being elected in 1924.

The General Conference of 1924 passed legislation providing for a definite amount of uniform matter for each of the official Advocates and elected Halford E. Luccock contributing editor with responsibility for the production and preparation of material for this section. It also provided for an Editorial Council consisting of all the Editors and the Contributing Editor for the purpose of conference and cooperation. This is a decided step in the direction of unifying and developing our church press.

Foreign Periodicals

We should also mention the place of The Book Concern in the publication of papers in foreign languages, in this country, besides the German language which already has been mentioned. About the middle of the last century our work began among the Swedish and Norwegian people in this country, and it was found difficult to serve them well without having a weekly religious paper. In 1864 the Book Committee officially began the publication of "Sandebudet" for the Swedish people; and shortly afterward issued the "Talsmand" to perform the same service for the Norwegian people. Later, other papers in the same languages were established on the Pacific Coast, but these have now been absorbed into the central papers, published in Chicago.

CHAPTER X

THE SERVICE OF THE BOOK CONCERN IN CHURCH FINANCE

We have referred, at an earlier place in this history, to the various forms of service rendered by The Book Concern to the church. It would seem to be wise if we should enlarge somewhat upon that, as it is a matter always provoking discussion among our people, yet going on year after year performing the different kinds of work which it has done from practically the beginning.

Let it be understood that the present capital—both the working capital and that which is invested in buildings and machinery of The Book Concern—amounts to $7,000,000. This money has all been earned by The Book Concern and stands to its credit as a surplus; with the exception that after the great fire in New York, there was collected through the churches for the purpose of rebuilding The Book Concern structure the sum of about $90,000; and after the Chicago fire of 1871 an amount equal to about $70,000 was contributed by churches, chiefly in the West, for rebuilding in Chicago. Aside from these two large donations for the purposes specified, all the capital and surplus now standing to the credit of The Book Concern, East and West, may be set down as the earnings of the business. And it is not

to be forgotten that these large subscriptions, made at the time of the fires aforementioned, have been overcome several times by other losses, including other fire losses; so that the total may now be fairly considered earnings of the two Houses, as the results of their business.

This is not all; for it must be kept in mind that a much greater sum than its present capital has been distributed by The Book Concern to various church interests which are entirely separate, and always have been, from the business of the Concern; but this great sum has been paid out on the orders of the General Conference, and is much larger than the present existing capital.

Nothing could be more unwise, as a business procedure, than to publish and dispose of the products of The Book Concern at absolutely cost of manufacture. There must be a margin of profit to take care of possible losses at any time, and fluctuations in the price of materials used in the business. The Book Concern could not have stood for a single quadrennium if it had not figured on a margin of profit. This margin was not a large one, and there never would have been any financial distress in the condition of the Concern if collections had been as easy as the sales. Still, we may say that the general result has been wholesome.

We found, as soon as the business became organized and was controlled from a center of publication, that the demand of our books was often greater than our ability to supply, and that with the

increase of the business came increase of demand upon the profits of the business. Very large sums of money, in the aggregate, were called for, for education; and through the years which followed other sums in payment of the salaries of the bishops and subsidies to support the new depositories and church periodicals, especially the Advocates, which grew in number as the country grew in its spread of population; in meeting the expenses of the General Conferences; in paying the expenses of fraternal delegates, in judicial Conferences and Commissions; in the printing of the General Conference Journal and General Minutes of the Church; and other such enterprises. And, above all, in the payment of dividends to the Conferences for the care and support of our worn-out men, and the widows and orphans of men who had died in the work. These claims were not all made at one time and not all at too early date. It would have been impossible not to have swamped the one publishing house with all these claims; but, as a matter of fact, when the House was struggling with almost no capital and was, indeed, in debt, before it could pay its debts or create a working capital some of these things for which profits were saved and used began to appear.

The General Conference of 1792, which was the first one held in The Book Concern history and the first one of which we have a printed record, even in so small a beginning, within two or three years after the opening of The Book Concern, discussed the

question of a "surplus," before they had a surplus. It would look almost like the play of children to discuss the use to be made of profits before profits were to be seen, were it not for the sublime faith and energy of the men who carried the project through.

There is another matter which looks small, but is not so small, which has appeared in later years. The records of the General Conference, published once in four years, show us that appeals without number have been made at its sessions by unfortunate buyers of Book Concern goods, or in their behalf, by others. They have sold the books, traveled their wide fields and failed to collect the prices that were to be received for the same. Many of the greatest of the old preachers who began our work in those early days became so tied up with debt, chiefly to The Book Concern, that they were forced to locate and go into other kinds of business, in order to meet their debts and support their families. These people, in the course of the years, in a very large company came up to the General Conference—as that was the only body that could do such things—asking that their debts to The Book Concern might be canceled and they be set free to go on with their work. We have record that in many cases where conditions warranted it—all cases were looked into with great care—these requests were granted; others were not granted, and others were compromised. We are told, by early historians, that this canceling of individual Book Concern debts was

the first real departure from the strict obedience to the "Sixth Restrictive Rule" which provided that all the surplus, after certain things were met, should go to the support of worn-out men. Having begun in making these exceptions, it has been done many times since, in the same and other matters; and nearly every quadrennium, for almost one hundred years, large drafts have been made upon The Book Concern Funds for the payment of these debts. Happily, the day is practically over, and the funds are now kept sacred for the proper Disciplinary disposition.

It was not a hard matter, in the days when we had one or two bishops, and they traveled on horseback and had only a pittance for their support, to see that the money was raised. But, when the number of bishops became greatly increased by the increase of the church; when they were required to make extended tours, not on horseback but in public conveyances, then their traveling expenses became a great burden and the collections authorized often did not meet the demand. In 1824 the General Conference, by direct instruction, ordered The Book Concern to pay the salaries and expenses of the bishops. This made the matter legal enough but took a large sum annually from the surplus account of the profits.

It is not necessary for us to give, in detail, the story of these demands upon The Book Concern. There was a theory that the bishops and General Conferences and such other needed expenses would

be taken care of by certain collections for their support; but the report of the treasurer of the Bishops' Fund in 1880 showed that the Fund had been overdrawn to that date $120,311.24. No one believed, and it was frankly stated, that the collection for that fund could be sufficiently increased to meet not only that overdraft but the current needs; so the General Conference, as the easy way out, directed the Agents of The Book Concern to pay the bill and charge the amount up to profit and loss.

The dividends paid to the Annual Conferences are the legitimate direction of the surplus funds. The original plan and order, at the beginning of the life of The Book Concern, was that the surplus, that is, the profits of the business, belonged to the superannuates, widows, and orphans and to distressed traveling preachers. Any other appropriation of these funds is without constitutional authority. And in the face of that, we have had all these departures above noted, on the principle, we suppose, that the creator is greater than the thing created; so the General Conference has chosen many times to make many exceptions to this Restrictive Rule. The history shows us that it is clear that The Book Concern shared its profits, under the rule quoted above, with needy preachers and widows, from the very beginning of its history. It is not easy to determine what the amounts distributed were, because we have a lack in the record; but some years the dividends were united with what was known as

the "Chartered Fund" and by a special fund, which was acquired by assessments on the members of the Conference. For a few years after the organization of The Book Concern, each preacher when admitted to full membership in the Conference, paid into this special fund $2.67; and then, afterward, $2 per year. From this fund a worn-out preacher received $64 per year; the widow of a deceased preacher, $53.53; and a minor child, the same amount. A few years later the Preachers' Fund, as this last was called, was by vote of the General Conference merged into the "Chartered Fund," supposing that would be the best distribution of the two interests involved; the Preachers' Fund made up of contributions from preachers only; the Chartered Fund, from gifts from any disposed to contribute to it. The Preachers' Fund has long been forgotten; the Chartered Fund still exists. It is managed by its incorporated board, which has its business office in the city of Philadelphia. But this fund seems to lack the enthusiasm which would have made it very much larger.

One cannot help stopping here to think a moment on what might have come to pass if the Preachers' Fund had continued unto this day. It would not have been a calamity nor a great distress for any preacher in our work to have paid over to the proper treasurer $2 each year, as his contribution toward the fund, to care for his old age. The contributions from one hundred preachers would have been $200; and that would have been invested and

the interest used; in the beginning it would have been a day of small things; but it would not have taken Methodism long to grow into a body of one thousand ministers; and that would have made a fund of $2,000 per year. And now that it has grown until the body of Methodist preachers is nearly twenty thousand, one can easily see what the fund would be growing into. We have no question that it should have been done. We should have continued this small assessment each year, and should have carefully watched over the principal sum; and used, through the years as part of the annual dividend to the Conferences, the interest earnings of the Preachers' Fund. We cannot see where there could have been the slightest objection in maintaining this fund in its integrity, and it would have amounted now to millions of dollars and would have become, before another hundred years, the only necessary fund for the care of our men. We are not making accurate figures; we are simply showing how matters will grow and how wonderful an opportunity the church missed. There would be nothing but increased self-respect in the preachers attending to this matter. Then, besides this fund, let there be all possible endowments and funds as well.

It is too late in the matter of the Preachers' Fund of olden time; but it is not too late to create another fund like unto it in spirit and plan; and it should be done. We believe the churches and preachers would welcome it and make it a very effective part

of the work of the great Board of Conference Claimants.

One matter that should be looked into a little further is that a large sum from the dividend or surplus fund has been used to create a very great practical service which The Book Concern has rendered the church, in the payment of what are called subsidies or sums each year to help in the expense account of various publications. In the matter of church newspapers the policy of the church has been to establish such papers in many centers of publication. The wisdom of the policy has been questioned many times, especially when considered in the light of the financial cost to the church. But it is fitting to say this in regard to the matter: A church paper should never be considered in the light of a profit-maker or loser. The church paper, as the history of our people has demonstrated so fully, has been regarded as almost an essential, if not entirely so, in the life of the church and in the loyalty of its membership.

In 1826 the only center in which it seemed necessary to establish and maintain a weekly paper was New York, when the Christian Advocate and Journal was started. But population spread rapidly and over the Alleghany Mountains, through the valleys of the Ohio and Mississippi, great metropolitan cities grew up, and it was just as necessary by the year 1834 to establish in the city of Cincinnati the Western Christian Advocate as it had been to establish the first. Then there followed the North-

western Christian Advocate, in Chicago, in 1852, for the same reason. And, as the country developed in population to the west and southwest, Saint Louis made her demand for a weekly, and the Central Advocate was started in 1856. Meantime, Pittsburgh was maintaining in a partially independent way her own paper; and various other cities from time to time have had their own publications. There was an Advocate started in Charleston, South Carolina, and another in Nashville, Tennessee, and one in New Orleans. These had varying histories, owing to the division of the church. We then crossed the Rocky Mountains; and when the great new country opened up about San Francisco, in 1852, we started the California Christian Advocate. In 1856 the Pacific Christian Advocate was started; and these have worthily maintained our church interests both local and general, during the years since.

He who supposes that a church like ours could get along and grow, that the different centers could keep a spirit of unity, without these local weekly church papers, certainly mistakes the human nature with which we have to deal. People have always been more willing to support their church paper if it is published somewhere near their homes. It will always be so. The weekly visitor that comes to our homes to bring us the story of the growth of the church and all the things going on in the world of Christian work is as important a factor in the holding of the church together as anything we have, or possibly can have. The one thing that, more

than any other, made the great Methodist Middle West, was the care given to the publication of our religious weeklies. Before they were upon their feet, earning and paying their own way, as we have the record, each one of the family of Advocates cost the General Conference and, through that body, The Book Concern, more or less heavily to maintain. Sometimes there was financial panic in the air; sometimes a great shortage in crops. Sometimes good men decided they could get along for a year or two without the Advocate. The matter had to be watched and guarded all the time; and only in that way would they finally live through to better days.

The church has had a policy of doing its missionary work in all countries until self-support is possible. In a like manner it has proposed to do its literary work in a missionary sense in the same way. We do not know, at the present time, of any of the members of the Advocate family that have been self-supporting from the start. It may be true of one or two, but we do not know where they are. The theory has been that if help is given for a few years, it would develop a self-supporting condition in the papers and then, possibly, profits. This has proved true in a possible few instances, but in comparatively few of the papers has the expectation been realized. The church papers, as a list, have been leaning heavily on The Book Concern for a good many years. Hundreds of thousands of dollars of the surplus earnings of the two publishing Houses have been given; chiefly to make the church's

periodical literature immediately accessible to the people. The present writer believes this is the right policy, though it is a disputed point. Many of our good and thinking people believe that only a paper that pays its own way should be maintained. But, in the nature of the case, each Advocate is an organ of publicity; and publicity has to be paid for. And there can be nothing better done to furnish facts concerning the growing story of Methodism in the world, to advertise in an attractive way the products of our presses, to push the sale of our books, to take care of the growing interests of our Sunday schools and all their wonderful literature, than to do it by the Advocates. That is their great task; and what they lack in earnings should be paid by The Book Concern profit account and the amount charged up to publicity and advertising; and we should stop complaining that our literature costs us too much.

Years ago, when the writer was a young man, he unfortunately incurred a large debt, one year, to the Book Concern. It was a bad year for crops, and so a bad year to collect on salary. He had served the full limit term and was obliged to move and was leaving a large sum due him; therefore he was unable to meet all his bills. He faced the collector of The Book Concern, at that time one of our wisest and most helpful men, and made such an arrangement as proved entirely satisfactory. A large part of what he had ordered, however, was for hymnals, Advocates, and Sunday-school supplies

which he had ordered to be charged to himself, without any thought that crops would fail and money to pay the bills fail him. On the year in which the entire indebtedness was paid, the same good man visited the Conference and the writer said to him: "I am never going into debt any more to The Book Concern. There is too much distress of mind about it and it ought not to be required." For in those days we sold everywhere the product of the Concern and settled as we got our pay from the buyers. The old man smiled and said: "On the contrary, my dear brother, I guarantee that within three months you will open another account. You will not see your people go without your supplies; you will not go without the book you need; and do not forget that while we get into hard places as you have been, the value of The Book Concern as a giver of credit, taking care of all literary interests of the men who are true to it, is beyond all price in its value." Many times, in later years, we have thought of that, and we do believe that the Methodist preacher who looks at the matter of his opportunity, even his credit accounts with The Methodist Book Concern, no matter where he lives in the wide world, now can find the supplies he needs, and can keep himself up to the times in his reading and studying, though he may be lacking very frequently in the ability to make a monetary settlement on the instant. One can safely trust the House that trusts him not to do him harm, but to be a help and service in every need.

CHAPTER XI

THE PUBLISHING HOUSE OF THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH, SOUTH

This publishing house, with its manufacturing plant, its retail store and its business and editorial offices, is located in Nashville, Tennessee, and maintains branch houses in Dallas, Texas; Richmond, Virginia; with also a small store in San Francisco.

Those who are familiar with the history of our church and have followed its story through its first fifty years of existence, have come to a point where a very delicate situation developed, owing principally to the fact that the church had already covered the entire settled portion of the country. It was not a time of railroads and telegraphs and easy transportation. As a rule, settlers did not go far from home and the preachers who served them usually maintained their entire ministerial career in that region of the country where they began their work. Transfers from one section to another were few, and hence there grew up such local forms of practice and such local expressions of faith as made some considerable differences between various parts of the wide country. It is not the purpose of this narrative to enter into a history of church life or

polity to any extent; but only to treat of such parts of it as relate to our particular subject, the literature and publishing work of the church. However, one cannot tell this part of the story without entering to some extent upon the general history of the denomination at that time.

The final resulting catastrophe, as we feel bound to call it, which came in the division of the church between the North and South, was in 1844, after many years of controversy in which great differences of opinion developed. As the result of much careful study, it is our conclusion that the church was not divided, primarily, upon the question of slavery. The church, as a body, had expressed itself on many occasions and in different official forms on the question of slavery as it was related to the life of the church. We do not find, in any of the records, that there had been any legislation in any conference, in favor of the continuance of slavery or of the ownership of slaves by Methodists. Instead of the usual position taken, we believe that slavery was the occasion for the division, and not the cause. Back of the occasion, were the long years of debate and division of opinion on quite another matter. This was upon the supremacy of the episcopacy or the supremacy of the General Conference. This controversy had given rise to widely diverse opinions between the North and the South. The South believed, in a general sense, that the supreme authority was vested in the bishops of the church, while the North came to believe, more and more, in the

supremacy of the General Conference; that it had the same authority over the bishops that it had over the general ministers of the church; that the General Conference had the right to finally pass upon the standing and work of the bishops the same as of other itinerants.

Those who have read the history of the church for two or three of the preceding quadrenniums, can see how more and more of these two general dividing opinions influenced the church. Good men of the North and also of the South were equally anxious to avoid any strife which might result in a final division of the church. The occasion of the marriage of one of the bishops in the South to a slaveholder brought the issue to the General Conference, the majority of whose members believed in the authority of the General Conference over its bishops; and the controversy resulted in the division of the church into two parts. The South, believing in and asserting its rightful dissent from the original church in this country, claimed that the division was a separation; while the North, being in the majority and believing in its own succession from the fathers, insisted that it was not a separation, but a secession; that the Southern Methodists had left the original fold and had no rights, as seceders. It is evident from the history that there was far more of sorrow in the separation than there was of ill temper. An agreement was entered into that the South should have a division of the assets of the church, in accordance with a proportion of the mem-

bership, North and South. So far as The Book Concern was a part of this agreement, it covered the church papers published in the South and the proper proportion of Book Concern property.

The Methodist Episcopal Church, South, held a Conference in the city of Louisville in 1845, in which the church was organized. That body, at that time, favored the establishment of a publishing house and appointed Rev. John Early, of the Virginia Conference and Rev. John B. McFerrin, of the Tennessee Conference, as Agents, to begin the work; to collect the money for the same and to receive propositions for a location for the new publishing house. The first General Conference of this church was held in 1846, one year later than the organizing convention at Louisville. This Conference was held at Petersburg, Virginia, and it provided only for what was called a Book Agency; and established depositories at Louisville, Kentucky; Charleston, South Carolina; and Richmond, Virginia. The Rev. John Early, who had been doing the preliminary work for the preceding year, was duly appointed Agent and was authorized to take up collections throughout the church, to assist the new publishing house. Mr. Early was reappointed in 1850.

Since there had been a separation between the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and the Methodist Episcopal Church, the property rights of the new church had to be settled, and this question became a matter of litigation between the two bodies.

As the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, meeting in Pittsburgh in 1848, felt that it could not act in the matter of a property division, owing to a division of opinion in the North, the result was that nothing was done at that time. The Western Book Concern was incorporated under the laws of Ohio, with headquarters at Cincinnati. The Methodist Book Concern, at the same time, was incorporated under the laws of New York. The court which settled the question of property division under the Ohio corporation decided that the agreement entered into was not legal, without the consent of preachers and people who were governed by the Ohio corporate act, and therefore the division proposed could not be made. The New York court decided that the procedure was legal and that it could be entered into and completed. The result was that nothing was accomplished. So the case was carried to the Supreme Court of the United States and by that Court was settled, ordering the Methodist Episcopal Church to transfer to the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, so much of the capital and produce of The Methodist Book Concern as was proportionately due to it. This sum amounted to $282,000. This amount, together with what had been collected and added to the treasury for this purpose, made the total assets of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, about $400,000.

It should be added that such a sum of money, in those early days of our church development, was a great sum to handle; and it is of interest to know

that The Methodist Book Concern and the Western Methodist Book Concern together shouldered the responsibility and paid every dollar of this amount. It required some years to make these total payments. Bonds were issued and the money was procured in that way to make the payments; and The Book Concern paid and retired these bonds as fast as it was possible. It must be remembered that the Civil War came on; and that during all those hard and dark years the credit of The Book Concern was maintained and the debt was gradually reduced. It is also true that during those years there was a draft made upon The Book Concern for the salaries of the bishops and for the expenses of the General Conferences. For a number of years no profits were paid to the veterans of the church in those times, for these three great items had first to be cared for: the bonded debt to the church South, the bishops' salaries, and the General Conference expenses, not entirely, but nearly all paid by The Book Concern. It is a marvel that the business was carried on with such conservative skill that at no time was there a failure in her doing for the church whatever was required of her.

The General Conference of the church South, held in Columbus, Georgia, in 1854, ordered the discontinuance of the Book Agency which had been adopted in 1846; and in its place adopted a plan for a publishing house at Nashville, Tennessee. This was to be under the control of two Agents and a Book Committee. For this work, as Agents, Rev.

E. Stevenson and Rev. F. A. Owens were selected. In 1854 property was purchased in Nashville for a publishing house, at a total cost of $37,382.52. The first financial exhibit was made in August, 1855, showing assets of $413,238.83 and liabilities of $83,386.18.

The situation from 1855 to 1858 shows a great depreciation in the assets of the publishing house. The Committee on Books and Periodicals of the General Conference of 1858, to whom was referred the report of the Book Agents, state that after carefully analyzing the report they find a balance in favor of the assets of the house of $358,885.58; and yet find the liabilities to be very serious. The whole amount of liabilities was $100,866.38, while the available cash resources amounted to $53,000, thus leaving a balance to be provided for, for the debt, of $47,866.38. The great financial panic of 1857 had swept over the entire country and everything—labor, materials, provisions, rents, etc.—had appreciated in cost from 50 per cent to 100 per cent. The high rate of expenses and the very low rate of sales had so reacted against the usual course of trade that the Agents were seriously embarrassed; and a number of periodicals ordered by the General Conference and published by the house had failed to meet their expenses. Growing out of the financial conditions a great difficulty in collecting debts had occurred. The Agents found difficulty in transporting books of the publishing house to many points distant from the seat of publication; and

among other things, they stated that many publishing houses throughout the country had suspended, owing to the stress of the times.

It is of interest, and a matter of record, also, that in the quadrennium previous to this report a law suit between the Methodist Episcopal Church and the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, had to be met by these Agents, paying the expenses of the suit and that to meet the drafts ordered in favor of the Commissioners practically exhausted their ready cash. The Agents at this time also paid the salaries and traveling expenses of the bishops and in order to sustain the publishing house the Committee said, at this time, "It must be released from all outstanding liabilities, and that it must secure the concentrated energy and serious and harmonious patronage of the whole church, as sectional or local sales would be fatal to this great enterprise of the Southern church." The Committee was satisfied that the Agents had exercised their best skill and ability in performing the task laid upon them, but said in addition, "Of their successes the General Conference must make up its own judgment."

The General Conference of 1858 elected Rev. J. B. McFerrin as Agent and following this time, the War between the States occurred and no General Conference was held for eight years, or until 1866. However, we find that the Agent prepared a statement in 1862, showing assets of $395,264.86 with liabilities of $72,072.83. During the Civil War, the publishing house was taken over by the Federal

government for its own uses, and after the close of the Civil War and many years of expectancy, the United States Congress authorized payment for the use of the property during the Civil War.

At the General Conference of 1866, Rev. A. H. Redford, of Louisville Conference was elected as Agent. Doctor Redford found the liabilities of the house about what they were in 1862, but the assets had sustained a shrinkage of $236,365, as during the Civil War the publishing house had sustained a considerable loss at the hands of the Federal army. In 1872 the publishing house was destroyed by fire and was rebuilt.

At the General Conference of 1878 the Book Committee found the liabilities of the house to be $350,843 and the assets, $232,460. It was a serious situation; and with this state of affairs confronting them, the Book Committee entered into negotiations with the creditors of the publishing house to pay their debts as rapidly as possible, and, if it were deemed expedient, to sell the property and machinery. The General Conference of 1878 again elected Rev. J. B. McFerrin as Agent. He issued coupon bonds bearing 4 per cent interest, payable semiannually; same secured by a mortgage on the publishing house property. These bonds were later all redeemed and the publishing house entered upon a prosperous era; for in 1886 their indebtedness had been reduced to $85,805 and in 1890 their assets were $569,739.75 and liabilities were $10,575.

In 1887 the publishing Agent, Rev. J. B. McFer-

rin, died and the Book Committee elected as his successor Rev. J. D. Barbee. Doctor Barbee associated with him in the management of the house, Mr. D. M. Smith. The General Conference of 1890 elected Doctor Barbee as Agent and Mr. Smith as Assistant Agent. They were reelected in 1894 and 1898.

In 1902 the General Conference elected Rev. R. J. Bigham as Agent and Mr. D. M. Smith as assistant. The assets were at that time $964,867 and the liabilities $17,181; aggregate sales, $400,700. In 1903 Doctor Bigham resigned and Mr. D. M. Smith and Rev. A. J. Lamar were elected as Agent and Assistant Agent, respectively.

In 1904 it was decided to erect a model publishing house building; and the location on Broadway and Ninth Avenue was selected, upon which now stands the present publishing house. It is of strictly fire-proof construction: frame of steel, walls of steel and brick, and floor of concrete. It is six stories high and covers a space of sixty-five by two hundred feet.

The General Conference of 1906 abolished the office of assistant Agent and elected Mr. D. M. Smith and Rev. A. J. Lamar as Book Agents. This official title was changed by the same General Conference to that of Publishing Agents. Mr. Smith and Doctor Lamar were reelected as Publishing Agents by the General Conferences of 1910, 1914, and 1918.

The publishing house at Nashville is equipped

with all modern machinery. Its various departments are well organized and managed by trained and expert editors, with loyal and faithful employees. Besides the publication of books, tracts, and Sunday school literature, the publishing house is the home of the Christian Advocate, the official organ of the church.

To go back a little: In 1834 the Rev. Louis Garrett and the Rev. John Newland Maffitt, under joint editorship, established at Nashville, Tennessee, a paper called The Western Methodist. The General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, which was held in Cincinnati, Ohio, in 1836, established the Southwestern Christian Advocate, with Thomas Stringfield as editor. With this paper was merged The Western Methodist, before mentioned. As Mr. Stringfield declined reelection, the Rev. Charles A. Davis, of New York, was elected; but he also declined. The Rev. J. B. McFerrin was then elected by the Tennessee Conference, serving for eighteen years. The name of the Southwestern Christian Advocate was changed, by the General Conference of 1846, held at Petersburg, Virginia, to the Nashville Christian Advocate. The General Conference of 1858 held at Nashville, elected the Rev. Holland N. McTyeire as editor. The Rev. Thomas O. Summers was elected editor in 1868. In 1878 the Rev. O. P. Fitzgerald was elected as editor and served until 1890.

The Book Committee, in 1886, elected as Assistant Editor the Rev. W. A. Candler, who served

two years and was succeeded by the Rev. John W. Boswell, who also served two years. The General Conference of 1890, held at Saint Louis, elected the Rev. E. E. Hoss as editor and the Rev. E. M. Bounds as assistant. Doctor Bounds served four years and the Book Committee elected the Rev. J. W. Boswell as assistant. The General Conference of 1902, at Dallas, Texas, elected the Rev. George B. Winton editor and the Rev. S. F. Godby assistant. The General Conference of 1910, at Asheville, North Carolina, elected the Rev. T. N. Ivey as editor and the Rev. J. S. Chadwick assistant. In 1918 Doctor Chadwick resigned and the Rev. R. S. Satterfield succeeded him.

The Methodist Review

The first editor of the Methodist Review of the Church South was the Rev. H. B. Bascom, who was elected by the General Conference in 1846. The Methodist Review was then moved to Richmond, Virginia, and in 1850, the Rev. D. S. Doggett was elected editor and reelected in 1854. The Rev. Thomas O. Summers was elected as editor in 1858. The Review continued to be published until the Civil War, at which time it was discontinued.

At the General Conference of 1870, the Rev. A. T. Bledsoe, of Virginia, offered, on certain conditions, to unite the Southern Review of which he had been editor and publisher, with the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and its Review; and his offer was accepted. The General Conference of

1878 appointed a committee to make arrangements for the publication of a Quarterly Review, without financial risk to the church. The Rev. J. W. Hinton was the editor. It was published without loss. Then, for three years, it was published without loss by another Board of Managers, under the editorship of the Rev. Thomas O. Summers. At the General Conference of 1882 the Review was adopted by the church, and Rev. J. W. Hinton was elected editor.

At the General Conference of 1886 the editorship was placed in the hands of the Book Editor, the Rev. W. P. Harrison, who was reelected in 1890. The General Conference of 1894 elected the Rev. J. J. Tigert as editor, who served until 1906. In 1906 the Rev. Gross Alexander was elected and served until his death in 1915; then the Book Committee elected the Rev. H. M. DuBose. The Rev. F. M. Thomas was elected by the General Conference in 1918; and at his death, in 1921, the Book Committee elected Rev. Gilbert T. Rowe to succeed him.

Sunday School Work

The General Conference of 1854 established the Sunday School Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, composed of a board of managers, consisting of the bishops, the senior of whom was president; one vice-president chosen by each Annual Conference; two vice-presidents chosen by the Society; a corresponding secretary; a recording secre-

tary; a treasurer; thirty lay members and the preachers established in Nashville, Tennessee.

In 1866 the General Conference abolished the Society as being inoperative and cumbersome as a piece of machinery, and in 1870 elected the Rev. A. G. Haygood as Sunday school secretary and editor, and in 1871 adopted the Uniform Lessons. In 1876 the International Lesson System was adopted and the Rev. A. G. Haygood was reelected in 1874. In 1878 W. G. E. Cunnyngham was elected. In 1894 the Rev. W. D. Kirkland was elected. In 1902 the Rev. James Atkins was elected. In 1910 the Rev. E. B. Chappell was elected, and reelected in 1914 and 1918.

The Sunday school literature published by the house has a large and growing circulation, both for the improved Uniform and the Graded Series.

The Epworth Era, the official organ of the Epworth League, is issued by the publishing house press. It was begun September 6, 1894. The editors were the Rev. S. A. Steele, the Rev. H. M. DuBose, and Rev. F. J. Parker, who continues as the editor.

CHAPTER XII

THE LABOR QUESTION IN THE BOOK CONCERN

One can hardly provide for a complete history of The Methodist Book Concern and not give some attention to what is commonly called the Labor Question, as it relates to this part of the business and work of the church. For many years of its earlier history, The Book Concern passed through a time undisturbed by any of the conditions which have since grown up between employers and employees, as exhibited at the present time. The first half century and more of the history of the Methodist Episcopal Church covers the time of the beginnings of settlement and development in this country. The chief object of the people was to find themselves new homes, and this, of course, resulted in an exodus from the Eastern to the Western part of the country; and simple living, including hard work, was the order of the day. For many years there was practically no discussion anywhere in the country on questions involving labor and capital.

As manufacturing interests appeared and communities became more settled and populous, and in better financial condition, these questions arose, so that it was natural for an institution like The Book

Concern, operating with an increasing capacity and an increasing force of working people, to have its controversies along the same lines. There was little occasion for debate during many years, as The Book Concern began by employing the services of one man, who filled every position from that of the Book Steward down to the errand boy; and as the number of employees grew slowly, there was little occasion for differences of opinion. At the date of this writing the force employed by The Methodist Book Concern numbers about twelve hundred people, hence the interest which has been manifested in such discussions.

A brief statement concerning the general conditions under which our large company of employees now do their work will be in place at this point in our story. For many years it has been the definite purpose of the Publishing Agents to insure the very best working conditions possible in our business and under the conditions of trade obtaining in the country. In this the Agents have been heartily seconded and aided in every way by the members of the Book Committee, individually and collectively. We quote from a recent report made by the Publishing Agents to the General Conference:

"We have sought steadily to put into use every improvement in which the welfare of our working people was concerned, and we are now operating our entire business under conditions which are the best of which we have any knowledge, as existing in any publishing house in the country and which will

be changed for the better as fast as better things appear. We wish it to be understood that we are absolutely committed to the welfare of our employees. We pay the recognized scale of wages as adopted by the various unions. In some cases, we pay more than the scale because the worker is worth more. We provide a minimum wage for our working girls. Much of their work is what is called 'piece work.' If at any given time with the piece work there is a failure to earn the minimum wage, it is then made up to them, so that whether work is slack or not, the wage is always secure; and if they earn more, by piece work, than the minimum, whatever surplus there is, is their own.

"We are working under the rule of the eight-hour day. Much experiment as well as experience proves that practically no business can be run profitably on shorter time than the eight-hour day. Our people work forty-eight hours a week; but to complete their forty-eight hours, we allow them to add a few minutes in the morning, shorten the noon hour a few minutes and complete the week by twelve o'clock on Saturday; thus, without loss to the House, providing a Saturday half-holiday, the year around, for all our people. We have found that this has both a physical and a moral value. We provide rest rooms for both men and women; reading rooms supplied with literature; shower baths for our workmen; and every possible safety appliance on our machinery that is known to modern skill. All these matters are having our particular attention in

the equipment of all new buildings erected in our work.

"We are installing and hope to have completed without great delay a complete system of oversight for cases of illness, accident, etc., among our working people. There is, in some of our places of business where there is a large number of employees, a regular system of care for the sick by which, if the person afflicted furnished the certificate of the physician whom we send to serve him that the illness is genuine, there is no stoppage of wages and every possible care is given. This has created a spirit of helpfulness among our people, so that it is the common thing that when a workman is sick, we have the best reason for continuing his wages until he is well, as his fellow workmen, as far as is possible, do his work in addition to their own; thus helping us to avoid the hiring of extra help, and keeping the sick man's place open for his return.

"Throughout our entire business our employees are covered by a plan of group insurance which is placed with one of the strongest old-line life insurance companies and by which each person in our employ has a life insurance policy equal to the amount of his yearly wage, up to a maximum of $2,400. The premium on this insurance is paid by The Book Concern. At first it might appear that this is an extravagant sort of help, which could not have a real return; but our experience for several years proves that it has a very heartening, helpful influence over our employees. No matter how poor

they are, they have an estate as large as their yearly wages, which is paid to the beneficiaries at death. It makes for self-respect and for much more efficient service. An employee whose life is insured, whose health is cared for, whose surroundings and opportunities are of the very best possible to provide, is far less likely to be restless and to desire change. The House is well repaid for the expense. The cost, so far, has been not far from one per cent annually on the total amount of insurance carried.

"Now, on the matter of these items covered by this description, as well as other things which go to increase the efficiency and welfare of our people, we have this to say, finally: If there is anywhere in the business or manufacturing world a better illustration of practical efficiency and Christian social service, in concrete form, than is found in The Methodist Book Concern under its present plan of operation, we have not discovered where it is. As fast as improvements come, if they are of value, they are adopted.

"The Book Concern, for many years, has operated under the plan of the 'Open Shop.' Serving as we are so wide a constituency, with so many different beliefs and opinions concerning the labor question, it has seemed to us wise and right to serve all alike. We do not question any man's right to belong to a labor union. It is usual for us to have a good many union men in our employ. There are only two conditions of employment in The Book Concern: The man must be of good character, and

be an efficient workman. We do not say that a man shall do so much work in a day and no more, thus destroying his personality and ambitions and reducing him to the level of the most inefficient employee. If he earns more, he is paid more; and our only insistence is that in the operation of such a House, which works as the servant of a wide constituency with people of all sorts of opinions, the executive agents must have the privilege of conducting the business without outside influence."

We operate an eight-hour day. There have many statements been made that The Book Concern was driven to the adoption of the eight-hour day by the pressure of outside demands upon us and that we did not yield until we were forced to do so. It is also said that we were claiming to have operated the eight-hour day longer than we really have done. Our answer to this—and we set it down here for its historic value—is that we instituted the eight-hour day November 1, 1906, and have since operated the business on that basis. We quote here, from the report of the Publishing Agents to the General Conference of 1908:

"For years we have been working at the problem of an eight-hour day, reducing it from ten to nine hours when that was the only thing we could reach. When the time came that it seemed wise to take the next step, we inaugurated the eight-hour day throughout our entire business; not because certain men were on a strike in various parts of the country to secure that end, but because we came

to believe that The Book Concern could afford to do what we all desired to see accomplished. We have thus operated the eight-hour day for the last year of the past quadrennium. It should not be forgotten that this has required more men and more machinery, as we could not lessen the output of our manufactured goods. The difference between the eight-hour and nine-hour day for our workmen means, in each case, three hundred and twelve hours per year; and that, reduced to money, has meant an actual cost in wages, to maintain the eight-hour day in the two cities, Cincinnati and Chicago, a total of $30,827.36, besides the expense of $12,577 for new presses made necessary by the change in hours. A corresponding increase in costs occurred in New York. But we have the testimony of our foremen in all departments that we have never had so efficient a force of men as we now employ under the eight-hour day and the open-shop system. There is no friction, upon this matter, within the House itself."

Up to the date of the present writing more than four quadrenniums of Book Concern work have gone by, and we are still on the same plan of work; and the testimony here submitted might be reiterated, with added emphasis, as our experience and belief to-day. The present arrangement of labor and hours meets the hearty approval of all our people. It is a common thing for the Methodist Book Concern to be quoted with high approval on account of the labor conditions which obtain within it, and it has not been uncommon for us to receive

statements from representatives of our chief opponent in this matter: "You make it too hard for the labor union. No union is able to provide the care, including your insurance plan, your sick plan, and other helpful features, and never will be able to. We wish these features of your work might be dropped."

CHAPTER XIII

WELFARE WORK IN THE BOOK CONCERN

It is well for us at this point in our history to look both backward and forward as we consider the growth of the spirit of social activity and general welfare work among our employees, because we have already come a long way from the position occupied in past years toward that which we hope to occupy in coming years; meantime nothing of what we have already accomplished in the way of providing better conditions is considered perfect. Very few of the patrons of The Book Concern who depend upon our presses and working people for what they need in church literature have thought of the local conditions surrounding the places of production of this literature. Naturally, the oldest and largest of our Houses have the best developed system of social service. Some of our depositories are too small in the number of people and too meager in appointments and room to carry out our plans entire; but the plans are made and we expect them to be fully developed as the business develops.

The Book Concern management has not patterned any of its plans after what is done in other business houses; although it does not claim farther advance than some others. Aside from very occasional dis-

turbances, which scarcely touch us in our work and which originate with a certain class of the labor world, there has been almost no friction of any kind in the conduct of the business of the House, in any of its departments for quite a number of years. Our system of useful relationship and of mutual concession, our determination to study all questions of policy on their merits, has created a fine and growing spirit of good fellowship, and it is safe to say that no house in all the range of American industry can show a better spirit of cooperative work than does The Methodist Book Concern, a little farther developed in some Houses than in others, for the reasons stated above.

Let us take, for example, our Cincinnati House as a sample of what it is expected the entire organization will measure up to; although it is true that the New York and Chicago Houses are very little behind it now, in most things, and not at all in some. In Cincinnati there is really a fine social organization. All the holidays recognized in the country are recognized and utilized in The Book Concern. Rest rooms are provided, one for the men and one for the women. In Cincinnati the women's rest room is a great parlor, furnished as such; and plenty of time is given for its occupation by those who need it. Here, at the noon hour or in any time of indisposition, our workers can break the monotony of the daily task. In the men's rest room there is a large patronage by the men from all departments of the plant. These rest rooms, places

for relaxation and the development of mutual acquaintance, have come to be a fundamental part of our Book Concern life. A small item, and yet one that is appreciated, is the fact that many of our employees bring their lunches, and all of these individuals are furnished with hot coffee, free of charge, by the House at the noon hour. In this House there is what is known as the Summer Outing and Winter Inning—both of them picnics for all the employees and their families, and a regular part of the year's program. The expense is not large; the day's rest and recreation are worth while and the bills are borne by the House, all employees receiving full pay for the day. A two-weeks' vacation each year, with full pay, is allowed each employee. A fine chorus is maintained under a competent director, and once a week, during nine months of the year, the chorus meets. The hour is from 11:30 A. M. to 12:30 P. M. The House allows pay to all the members for the half hour of time given to the rehearsal. The chorus has an average attendance of seventy-five. It has a fine reputation and is frequently called upon on public occasions. The Book Concern has a baseball team which has a membership in a league of clubs which play on Saturday afternoons. During the winter months there is a bowling team.

Perhaps the greatest concession that has been made by the House to its employees is the Saturday half-holiday. Among the earliest pioneers of the Saturday half-holiday is The Book Concern. A

generation ago the day's work was ten hours long. No holidays were given except the legal holidays. As the Saturday half holiday came to be recognized and adopted more and more in the business world it became a part of the policy of The Book Concern. If it is absolutely essential to complete something that is necessary to do, and if that completion cannot be put off until the following week, it is never difficult to secure help to finish it during a part of Saturday afternoon; but unless it is necessary no employee is expected to work during that time. Arrangements can be made without much difficulty in a departmentalized business so that work can be planned to keep the Saturday half holiday sacred to its purpose. It is a matter of very great moral, as well as physical value, to observe this breathing time, for men and their families.

Once a week, during the noon hour, a class of women meets in the women's rest room for Bible study. This makes a helpful and pleasing variety in the life of the employees. Another small item which has its social value is that every employee is remembered at Christmas time by a present from the House. This is a recognition for service rendered. No distinction is made, as the errand boy in one of the departments receives the same recognition as the head of that department.

In case of the illness of one of the employees, The Book Concern pays to that employee full salary for eight weeks, and if necessary, half pay for another eight weeks. It is very seldom that employees have

to avail themselves of the full time of sick-allowance. In case of an accident, all employees are insured in the Industrial Commission of Ohio; we speak now particularly of the Cincinnati House. Under this State law, after the first week the employee receives from the State two thirds of his salary and the State pays all doctor and hospital bills. The Book Concern sees to it that the insured employee is paid in full, making up the difference in the amount received from the State and the salary received while actually employed. We speak of this as almost the final word in the care of employees, hoping and expecting that the same help will be available in all the States where we have any business locations. The general plan for the employees provides for a small emergency hospital equipment. In Chicago we have a regular trained nurse with the necessary equipment for primary hospital service. It is her duty to visit every case among our people, who are reported sick, and to provide for all necessary help. The case is in her hands. It is expected that all our Houses, especially those running manufacturing departments, will be presently equipped in this way with hospital bed, trained nurse, and first-aid appliances.

CHAPTER XIV

BOOK MANUFACTURE IN THE BOOK CONCERN

THE Methodist Book Concern maintains three manufacturing plants, located in New York, Cincinnati, and Chicago, respectively. It has several other places of distribution and general merchandising, but only the three above-mentioned have in connection with their work manufacturing plants. Chicago, at the present writing, is the youngest of these and has developed in a remarkable way its work of job printing, but as yet it does not possess a bindery. That will be added as the work develops. It will be of interest for the reader to know that these three manufacturing plants are equipped with the latest and most complete machinery needed for their work, and that the full cost of this machinery amounts to nearly a million dollars. It is understood that the making of books is only one branch of the business. The manufacture and sale of Sunday-school literature is much larger than that of books. This is largely the growth of the Sunday school of the church.

Few of our people understand the mechanical processes of bookmaking; how expert the operators must be, how expensive in the production of a book

a small blunder may be, and how near perfection the art of bookmaking has really been brought. We believe that a careful statement of the processes of making a book, telling the story of its mechanical production, will not only be of interest to our readers but becomes really a part of a complete understanding of the work which the church is doing in its production of good literature.

Very many more books are sent in to The Book Concern in manuscript form than can be accepted or printed. A fair statement, we think, would be that not more than ten per cent of the books offered the House are accepted for publication, owing to the very large number of manuscripts thus offered. There is now a very much more complete organization in the matter of handling these manuscripts than was the case formerly. In the earliest days the editors of our books were the Book Agents. After the general work and responsibility of the Agents had greatly increased, the editor of the Methodist Quarterly Review was made editor of books for the New York House, and the editor of the Western Christian Advocate performed the same service for the Cincinnati House. This proved simply an added burden to these editors, who already had all they could do; and gradually this manuscript censorship slipped out of their hands and naturally became the work of the Publishing Agents. For a number of the most fruitful years of our book publishing the work of editorship was solely in the hands of the Agents. It was a task too heavy

and a change was rightfully ordered. At the General Conference of 1904 the Book Committee was instructed to provide an editor for books. The Rev. R. J. Cooke, D.D., was thus elected, dividing his time between the House at New York and the one at Cincinnati. In 1912 the Rev. David G. Downey, D.D., was elected and has since served to the satisfaction of the entire church. The value of the service of Doctor Downey cannot be overestimated. His training and good judgment have widened the scope and added greatly to the influence of The Book Concern in the general world of books. His work has brought us to a place where we may have a distinct impress on the literature of our country. It is to be hoped that Doctor Downey may continue this service for many years to come.

Now, let us follow the book through its making: All manuscripts are first submitted to the Book Editor and all authors of books who thus submit their work are entitled to the courtesy of a careful examination and report. A very large number of books pass through the hands of the editor without being accepted and these are returned to the authors. The Publishing Agents and the Book Editor together study and pass upon the manuscripts which have been favorably reported. The final vote for publishing must be given by the Publishing Agents; and for years it has been understood that no book would be published without the unanimous vote of the Agents. It does not follow that because a book is rejected it is therefore unworthy of printing. It

may be that an entirely worthy manuscript may not be timely or in demand; or it may be that the subject in question has been fully covered by recent publications. The state of the market, the temper of the church, the needs of the church are all considered.

The work now falls into the hands of the Publishing Agents. Consultation is had with the manufacturing department. Instructions are given as to the size of type to be used, size of printed page, size of trimmed book and the details of the quality of binding, and such other matters as are necessary for a working plan. Then an order is given to the manufacturing department to set the type and make electrotype plates after the proofs are read and corrected, and to proceed with the work. The order for the book is thus entered in the office of the manufacturing department; and this is followed by another order to the various departments having to do with the making of the book.

Explicit instructions must be given, which every department must know. The foreman of the composing room must know whether the manuscript is complete; whether it is paged correctly. He must decide as to whether it shall be set by hand or by a linotype or a monotype machine.

When the type is set, the product of the machines is placed on galleys and galley proofs are taken with the matter set. These galley proofs, together with the original copy or manuscript, are sent to the proof reader. A copyholder reads aloud from the

manuscript to the reader. These galley proofs are then passed to another reader, who goes over them silently. Corrections are marked on the margins and the proofs then go back to the original typesetter, who must make corrections indicated.

It is understood that so far the matter on the galleys is made up from the long strips of type into pages of equal length, according to the size of the page before determined; and then what are known as page proofs are sent to the reader. When these have been corrected, a set is taken for the author or for the Book Editor, who is given an opportunity to read the manuscript in the form of the printed page. When these proofs are returned with corrections and changes marked by the author, a final revision is sent to the proof reader. Then the pages of type are locked up in forms with guard lines around every page and are sent to the electrotype foundry.

In the electrotype foundry cases are prepared by pouring melted ozokerite wax on plates of copper. The case is shaved to even thickness and covered with graphite. An impression of the book form is now made by the molder in the wax case. For this a hydraulic press is used. After this impression is made, the raised wax is cut down by the molder and the mold flashed with a gas flame. The case is now passed to the builder, who builds up with wax all the places in the mold that are to be low in the plate; and it is then put into what is called the blackleader, where it is polished with graphite. All places

where there is to be no deposit of copper are painted with melted wax, as copper will deposit only where there is graphite, which is a conductor.

The case is now washed with water, to get all the air out of the impression made. While the water is still on the case, a weak solution of sulphate of copper is poured on it and iron filings sifted into the solution, to precipitate the copper in the solution on that part of the case polished with graphite, and thus spread a thin filament of copper over all. This case is then hung from copper rods in a solution of sulphate of copper. A generator dynamo is used to generate the current for the plating process. A 115-volt current goes into the generator and this is transformed into a three to six-volt current in the dynamo; and a current of this voltage is used for plating or depositing copper on the case. The electric current passes through the solution and deposits copper from the solution on the case, which remains in the vat until a shell of about .005 of an inch in thickness is formed.

This shell is removed from the wax with hot water and is sent to the backing room, where the under side of the shell is tinned and then backed up with metal about three eighths of an inch thick. In the finishing room this cast is cut into pages and then put through what is called the "rougher" which gives the plate a rough, uniform thickness. The under side of the plate is then hammered into a condition of even surface. The plate then passes through the shaving machine, where it is shaved to

the thickness required for printing, usually less than one-sixteenth of an inch.

The plate is then beveled, so that it can be clamped to a patent block. When the plates for the book are ready for the press, the make-up man provides the form of patent blocks on which the plates are to be clamped when on the press. This form will contain sixteen or thirty-two or sixty-four blocks, governed by the size of the sheet of paper to be printed, or the size of the book to be printed.

The make-ready on the press requires some time. Sometimes the first impression made is hardly readable. One would think that with the care exercised in the foundry, hardly any make-ready would be necessary; but that is not the case. The pressman takes an impression of the form and such portions of the plate as are low in the impression are then underlaid. This process is repeated until there is a perfect level and therefore a perfect impression from the type. If the make-ready is all right, the press is then ready to run. If not, then it must be made to work perfectly.

Most books are printed on paper that will "work and turn" as it is said; or, in other words, one side is printed on a given number of sheets and then the other side is printed from the same form. The pages are so laid that if page one is at the extreme left of the form, page two which backs page one, in the printed book, will be on the extreme right of the form.

The printing press must be perfectly rigid, in

order to make an even impression. The form and the cylinder must measure exactly the same. The flow of ink on the press can be controlled by thumb screws set against a knife or plate of steel.

When cuts are to be printed, a special overlay is prepared. The paper used in the printing of a book will have its effect in the result of the press work. While type will print on a rough surfaced paper, satisfactory results in the printing of cuts cannot be obtained on such paper. All half-tone cuts should be printed on a paper having a smooth surface.

The sheets are now printed; and when the ink is dry they are sent to the bindery, and there they are folded. Having received the flat sheets, printed on both sides, from the press room, the first operation in the binding of the book is the folding of the sheets into signatures, or sections. If the book is printed on heavy paper, it has been so made up as to fold in sixteen-page sections. If printed on a light-weight, or India paper, the printing has been so arranged that the sheets will fold into thirty-two page sections. Practically all folding is now done by folding machines. You will find these built to fold sheets as small as two and one-half inches wide and three and three-fourths inches high; and from that size up to a sheet the size of the largest family Bibles, with a width of twelve or fourteen inches and a height of sixteen to twenty inches. If the book is illustrated, the illustrations, as a rule, are printed separately on what is called coated paper;

and these pages are pasted into the section as indicated by the list of illustrations.

The different sections of the book are perfect in themselves and are now ready to be assembled into a perfect book. This operation is called gathering or collating. A skillful operator has the various sixteen-page signatures so arranged that they can be gathered up without mistake into the full form of the book. The average book will run from two hundred to three hundred pages. The next operation, after that of collating, is the sewing. This sewing is performed by a very ingenious machine known as the Smythe Sewer, consisting of four revolving arms on which is a shaft which swings around at the rate of from forty to seventy movements per minute. Each of these machines has to have a special operator. The process makes a perfect lock stitch with from one to five curved needles in use, as may be required by the size of the book.

The books being now sewed are taken to a book trimmer or a cutting machine, where they are clamped in the machine in piles about six inches high; and the head, side, and foot of the books are trimmed by descending knives, with a shearing motion. The books are now perfectly square on back, front, head, and foot. If the books so trimmed are to have their edges gilded, they are then taken from the cutting table to the gilding room, where they are tightly clamped in rows in a press resting on a wood table, with a box underneath. When the books have

been tightly compressed, the operator sand-papers the edges very smoothly and supplements this by scraping the edges with a disc of steel. Then a coating of diluted albumen is applied and while still damp, sheets of gold leaf are laid on, until the edges of the books on the top of the press are covered. The operator then takes a wooden handle with a flat agate burnisher fastened in the end and runs it very forcibly over the edges of the books, with a sheet of heavy linen paper under the burnisher. The gold leaf now adheres to the edges, but it is very dull in appearance. The operator therefore takes another burnisher and rubs over the gold leaf on the surface of the books, but without using the linen paper. The books are now ready to be taken out of the press, with one edge gilded. If the book is to have full gilt edges, the above process is repeated three times.

The books are now all turned one way, with their backs toward the workman, who applies a coat of hot flexible glue to the back of the books. After the glue has set, the books are ready for the rounding and backing machine. A pair of rollers works in front of a flat feed table; one roller merely revolving on its axis, while the upper roller rises and falls at the rate of about eleven times a minute. The book is placed in the machine and as the rollers revolve, they force the book to become convex in the back and concave in the front.

To strengthen the book, the back is glued with flexible glue and a piece of cheesecloth is extended

about three-quarters of an inch over the side; and a head and tail piece known as the headband is put at the top and foot. The headband is made of calico, silk, or any other fabric. The back of the book next receives another coating of flexible glue over the cheesecloth and a piece of strong Manila paper the width of the back of the book, but a little shorter than the length of the book, is now fastened over the cheesecloth with paste. The book is now ready for the cover.

The first operation in making a book cover or case is to cut the boards to the size required for the book. This is done on a machine, the cloth coming in rolls from thirty-six to forty inches wide and from thirty-six to seventy-two yards long. By this machine, the cloth is cut into the proper shape for the book covers.

After the book covers are made by the case-making machine and then placed in their position as covers of the books, they are, of course, in a dampened condition. It would be very natural for them to warp, while drying, into different shapes; and to avoid this they are put into what are called book presses and these presses, when filled with books, are clamped down by a lever process until they are perfectly solid and the books are left from twenty-four to forty-eight hours, to become set and dry in the shape desired. Then the presses are unscrewed, the books are taken out and finally examined, volume by volume, at the wrapping table.

The examiner has to see that the first and last

leaf have been properly pasted. Then, that the title page has been properly set in its cover. Then that the paper jacket or outside wrapper is adjusted; and the books are finally sent, in small inclosed hand wagons, to the sales department; thus having gone entirely through the manufacturing department. The books so delivered by the manufacturing department are received and receipted for by that department. The factory is thereupon released from responsibility and the sales department becomes responsible. This is not done until all the books are examined and every one found in perfect order. The sales department then undertakes the work of distribution and sale.

For some years the Oxford Bibles which are sold in this country have been manufactured by our New York House, it being cheaper for the Oxford Bible Company, and just as well done, as if they had been made in England and then brought to this country. But the binding of a gilt-edged circuit or Oxford style of Bible is a branch of the binding business quite distinct from ordinary binding, which the House is called upon to do. Almost all binding of Bibles is done by hand. Up to the stage of cutting, the binding is very similar; but after that, it varies. Most Bibles are round cornered and have red under gold edges. Leather Bibles are usually made by the most skilled mechanics, as all kinds of leather and other materials are used for covers. Sheepskin, calfskin, silk cloth, and waterproof colored paper are used for lining the inside of the cover.

The leather for the cover, after being cut from the skin, has the edges skivered, or pared. The best Bibles have no lining or stiffening of any kind on the inside. The leather is turned in on itself. The stamping, the casing in, and all the finishing of this class of books is done by hand.

The backs of Bibles, after being rounded, are glued and attached to the back, only. After the glue has set, the sides of the book are pasted and pressed between smooth boards lined with Canton flannel. When thoroughly dried they are sent to the wrapping tables, for critical examination. After being wrapped they are sent to the sales department.

We grant that there has been a good deal of technical statement in this chapter, but we believe it may be of interest as a real part of the history of The Book Concern.

Concerning Presses and Printing

There can be found nowhere else a better illustration of the remarkable growth of the printing business than to follow its history in The Book Concern, illustrated by its workings in the Western House.

The first press ever owned by the House was bought in the year 1832; being brought from New York, across the Alleghany Mountains by wagon, and from Pittsburgh was sent down the Ohio River by flatboat to Cincinnati. This press can still be seen in the Cincinnati House, and is an object of great interest. It was used for the printing of hymn

books and other small books, the plates for which were sent from New York to Cincinnati.

The side uprights and feet of this press are of wood. The upper and lower braces are made of cast-iron, bolted to the uprights. The bed and platen are of cast-iron. The bed of the press, running on iron rails, is controlled by a drum under the rails to which are fastened thin belts, connected to each end of the bed; the turning of the drum in one direction brings the bed forward; and in the opposite direction makes the bed go backward. Hinged to the outer end of the bed is the tympan, on which paper was placed before printing. The platen is held in place by heavy steel springs bolted to the wooden uprights and these always force the platen upward. Between the upper iron brace and the platen are three heavy iron rods, one perpendicular and two in a slanting position. To the perpendicular rod is attached a horizontal handle or lever and to the bottom is fastened a round iron plate, in which the slanting rods rest. The operator of the press, pulling the lever toward himself, causes this plate to turn and place the slanting rods in a perpendicular position, and so forces the platen downward. To print on this press a form was placed on the bed. This was inked by a roller-boy, while the pressman placed the paper on the tympan; and with the proper adjustments made, the pressman, by drawing the lever toward himself, would take an impression of the form, on the paper. A pressman and roller-boy were able to print from 200 to 300

impressions in an hour; and the largest size sheet printed on this press was 19 x 24 inches.

This old press, which stands now in a place of honor, served the House for many years as a general utility machine. It was not used for the printing of the weekly Advocates, being too small for the size adopted; and the first press used for printing the Western Christian Advocate was larger in size, taking a sheet 24 x 38 inches. It was similar in construction, however, to the press we have described. The first copy of the Western Christian Advocate was dated May 2, 1834; and it was necessary to print this, one side of the sheet at a time. For several years this paper was printed on hand presses. Later, some time in the forties, a Taylor cylinder press was purchased for the printing of the Western Christian Advocate and the Christian Apologist. This press was turned by man power; The Book Concern at that time not having steam. This was followed by the Adams press, which was introduced chiefly for book work. It was an improvement on the hand press, running by steam power and printing from 600 to 700 impressions an hour.

The business grew, and in 1850 there were in the Western Book Concern three of the Adams presses, one Taylor cylinder press and several smaller hand presses. This number increased until, in 1870, there were in the House ten Adams, two cylinder, one pony press, one double cylinder press and three or four job presses. In 1890 a Hoe press,

for newspaper and pamphlet work, was purchased. This press printed from a roll and delivered 20,000 of the Beginners Quarterly, printed, pasted and folded, each hour. In 1897 the Cottrell Web Perfecting Press was purchased. This press will print 8,000 Classmates, 8,000 Picture Lesson Papers or 16,000 Sunday School Advocates in two colors, each hour. Press feeding machines have also been introduced. These are used on the flat-bed cylinder presses. These presses will print a sheet 40 x 60 inches, 1,600 an hour, fed by this automatic feeder.

The same growth in equipment has gone on in a larger measure in the New York House and is being followed by the development of the Chicago House. It is only recently that type has been set in any other way than by hand. The first inventor of movable type back in the centuries set his type in the same way that it has been set until the linotype and monotype have come into the composing room and are there to stay. The first of these machines were purchased in 1896. One of them, with an expert operator, will produce an amount of composition equal to five or six hand compositors. In that way, the product may be very greatly increased. If these machines are run, as they usually are, with two shifts of operators working eight hours each, an immense production is secured from them.

There have never been improvements developed successfully in the machinery of the printing and binding business that have not been added, sooner or later, to the equipment of The Methodist Book Con-

cern. A liberal education can be gained in this work by studying in detail what is already in daily use in our three great Publishing Houses, all for the service of the church. We do not look upon a detailed statement of any greater length, concerning the mechanical equipment of our Publishing Houses, as necessary to a practical history of what has been accomplished; we are not speaking of matters such as these because they are unknown, for thousands of people are visiting our factories each year and studying our entire equipment. Formerly, an expert workman could do what is called rounding and backing, in the process of binding, at the rate of not more than 600 books in a day. Now, with a later invention which shapes, rounds, and backs the book in one man's hands, this work can be done at the rate of more than 3,000 per day.

CHAPTER XV

SUNDAY SCHOOL LITERATURE

The response of the church to the supply of printed literature for Sunday-school work has been a remarkable thing. We think, for instance, of the two-story papers which were printed for Sunday schools and were in existence at the time of the division of Methodism, in 1844. One of these, The Sunday School Visitor, was taken over by the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. It has gone on through all the years and is still published. The other, The Sunday School Advocate, which was started in 1841, was published as a general paper for children and has gone on and expanded. The Classmate, which is distinctly a paper for the older young people, has grown out of the Sunday School Advocate; as has also the Picture Story Paper, which is published solely for little children. The Sunday School Advocate itself has very lately yielded to increasing demand for change of form and is now published as two papers; but it is a continuation of the life and spirit of the Advocate. One paper is for girls, distinctly, and is called The Portal; the other is for boys, distinctly, and is called The Target. Each is as large as the Sunday School Advocate was, and each is already enjoying a large circulation.

What has happened in the case of the Story Papers has happened, likewise, in the special Sunday-school lesson periodicals. The Sunday School Journal, which was started in 1860, has grown into three monthly journals, each with a large and growing circulation. They are, besides the Journal, The Adult Bible Class Monthly and The Home Department Quarterly. The Senior Quarterly was begun in 1862 and has multiplied itself until it is now twelve lesson quarterlies, each one serving effectively a department of the system of Sunday-school instruction, now in operation. In the Graded Lessons, prepared and issued during the period of eight years, from 1908 to 1916, we have for the first time attempted a complete system of religious instruction, these plans being made with a view to meeting the needs of each stage of growth from early childhood to mature life. These Graded Lessons are enjoying a constant growth and increasing influence; and the entire system of Sunday-school education has a bright future. It would appear that the teaching quality of these lesson systems is almost perfect.

One thing to which it seems wise to give our constant and careful inspection is the fact that we should not lose sight of the strictly religious side of the Sunday-school teaching. Beyond the pedagogical question is the question of spiritual force and power which should be insisted upon. Some of the best, most useful Sunday-school teachers have been those who had not the opportunities, which modern instruction gives so freely, of theoretical

and normal teaching; but have been housekeepers, hard workers, people unable to reach the opportunities which were desirable, but who have been among the most fruitful of all our teaching forces. These people must not be discouraged; and where it is impossible to carry out the full measure of Graded teaching, they must be allowed, in all willingness, to do the best they can. The real task of the Sunday-school teacher is to create a hunger for righteousness. The theories are well, but some must do the work in their own way.

In addition to the Graded Lesson textbooks, there are already in use the Mission Study textbooks which are prepared for the Foreign and Home Mission Boards; a fine College textbook series in Bible study and religious education; the Abingdon textbooks in religious education for Week Day School series; the Daily Vacation Church School series; and the Community Training series. In other words, five important groups of publications, in addition to the Sunday-school literature, all issued by The Methodist Book Concern which is, of course, a partner in the total enterprise.

It is a coincidence of great interest that the Sunday-school work of the English-speaking world was established in the city of Gloucester, England, by Robert Raikes, a Christian layman, in 1783. He was urged to take the step of calling together the children, who composed a growing rabble on the streets, for Bible study on the Sabbath. This was urged upon him by a young woman who was a

visitor in that city at that time, and who held what would correspond now to the office of deaconess, in Wesley's Chapel in London. Being in Gloucester, she persuaded Mr. Raikes to undertake the work, which he finally did. From Wesley's Church, in London, came the news to Bishop Asbury of the new idea and the part which that Methodist young woman had taken, in the first organization. Asbury was duly convinced that it was a step in the right direction; so within the next year, at the Conference of 1784, where the Methodist Episcopal Church was organized, the question is asked in the Minutes, "What should be done for the children?" and the answer is, "When there are ten children whose parents are in the Society, meet them at least one hour each week." From that, which was first put into practice in Virginia as soon as it could be done, came the two-fold idea of making the Sunday school a training school for religious instruction and also an institution to look after the neglected children of the community. This double idea, meaning so much, filling a want not heretofore provided for, spread throughout the entire church; and Sunday schools were soon formed in most of the charges. It was considered a part of the church work, the regular work of the pastor, but did not have any special recognition in the law of the church, for a good many years. The *Discipline* of 1828 seems to give the first record when steps were undertaken to supply the children with books and tracts as a regular part of the church's life and work. A soci-

ety known as the Sunday School Union was organized in 1827, but it was not organized officially by the General Conference until 1840, during which year the Sunday School Advocate was begun. It was the Organ of the Sunday school and of the Sunday School Union.

It seems a little remarkable that a department of church life and work which has become so great and so necessary in the later years was not recognized and put into service at a much earlier date than it seemed to be. If the place which was recognized in later years had been given to the Sunday school, and the church had been called upon to furnish definite Sunday-school literature, it would have been a very great assistance to the development of The Book Concern on its business side. We who live in these later days know well that the Sunday school of to-day is and has been the best customer of The Book Concern for the last fifty years. The demand upon the printing presses of The Book Concern made by the Sunday school and the things which belong to the Sunday-school work have been one of the great elements of fortunate business which has attended our work.

In 1844 Daniel P. Kidder was elected as the corresponding secretary of the Sunday School Union, which had been officially organized by the General Conference in 1840. At the same time he was made responsible for the editing of all Sunday-school publications then issued.

For the beginning of our Sunday-school publica-

tions we go back to the year 1823, when the Youth's Instructer was begun. It lived only a few years, but all agree that its work was commendable and helpful in the kind of Sunday school organization we then had. The Child's Magazine was started in 1825. For the times, it is said to have been attractive both in contents and appearance; but the anticipated patronage did not come—another evidence that a plan of organization seems to be necessary, as none of our papers have succeeded without a definite plan. The Child's Magazine did not live long. For a long time afterward the church seemed to rely for Sunday school help and instruction upon a department in the weekly paper, The Christian Advocate.

In 1860 the Sunday School Journal was begun. It was designed especially for teachers. In 1873 a new weekly paper, The Classmate, was issued for older Sunday-school pupils. We give below the list of Sunday school publications which followed: The Sunday School Journal; Intermediate Lesson Quarterly; Senior Lesson Quarterly; Beginners Lesson Quarterly; Picture Lesson Paper; Sunday School Advocate; Classmate; Illustrated Lesson Quarterly; Intermediate Lesson Leaflet; Leaf Cluster; Home Department Quarterly; Home Department Visitor; Berean Lesson Pictures; Primary and Beginners Teacher; Boys and Girls Lesson Quarterly. In the German: Die Glocke; Die Kleine Glocke; Bibelforescher; Der Bildersaal.

It has been the purpose of the church, in which

there has been a fine unity of desire, to provide all our people from the Cradle Roll to old age with proper Bible teaching, carrying the Sunday-school idea from the nursery at home to the older shut-in people, thousands of whom are now studying the Sunday-school lesson at the same hour, in their homes, as they would if they were in the school itself. So the entire plan of religious education and a proper interpretation of the Bible is sent out to reach every class of our people. The editors of our Sunday-school supplies have been: 1844-56, D. P. Kidder; 1856-68, Daniel Wise; 1868-88, John H. Vincent; 1888-1900, J. L. Hurlbut; 1900-04, T. B. Neely; 1904, J. T. McFarland, who died in the service after ten years; 1914, Henry H. Meyer, who is still in office.

CHAPTER XVI

THE STORY OF UNIFICATION: EAST AND WEST

As the years passed and the great West became more and more settled, first by pioneers, then by their sons, from the Alleghanies to the Pacific Coast, it was inevitable that the publishing business of the church should increase in volume and influence. This publishing work centered in the Western Methodist Book Concern at Cincinnati, and in the several depositories which had grown up in the region farther West. Without question, the plans of the fathers never included the great spread of The Book Concern business; these men lived from year to year without special plans for the future. At the first it seemed that the management of our book publishing and selling business always would be in the hands of a minister who was at the same time the pastor of a church. This seems to have been a recognition of the call of a preacher into the active ministry; and the business was not thought to be other than an enterprise which always would be in the hands of the ministers. So, because John Dickins, the first Book Steward, was at the time the preacher in charge in Philadelphia, the new Book Concern was established in that city, as a matter of course.

After Dickins died and the business had been in the hands of Ezekiel Cooper, certain small frictions had arisen in Philadelphia. By a vote of only two majority, the General Conference ordered the removal of The Book Concern to New York; and Mr. Cooper the Book Steward, whose chief business was to carry on the work of producing and selling books, was given a pastoral charge in Brooklyn, thus maintaining the plan on which the work had been begun.

As the country developed, ever taking its way westward in the prosperous years of settlement following the Revolution, many Methodists who had become such somewhere along the Eastern coast of the country had removed to the Middle West. The earliest and chief settlements west of the mountains were in Tennessee, Kentucky, and Ohio. Within a few years it developed that Cincinnati, on the Ohio River in the southwestern part of the State, was located geographically to be the commercial center and headquarters of the country both north and south of it. The highways leading to the West were slow of development. It was long before the time of railroads and a considerable period before the time of the steamboat.

The people in the West had increasing need of, and made increasing request for, an easier, better, and cheaper supply of their needs from The Methodist Book Concern. Recognizing this, finally, the General Conference of 1820 authorized the establishment of a branch at Cincinnati. It was not an

independent House, but was distinctly a branch of the New York House. It was not easy to secure supplies from the East; they had to be hauled in wagons and floated down the Ohio in flatboats from Pittsburgh; this seemed to be the common plan of the time. In later years the Cincinnati branch had grown to such an important relation to all its surrounding region that it was made a separate House; and finally, as is well known, there were two Houses incorporated: The Methodist Book Concern, at New York, and The Western Methodist Book Concern, at Cincinnati. The Agents of each were authorized to establish such branch depositories as the need of the business and the times seemed to require; and this has been the reason, as we understand it, behind the establishment of every branch of this great business, located in different parts of the country.

It seemed inevitable that there should be a division of the territory of the country between these two houses, and that there should arise a certain competition in the carrying on of the business, especially in the border line between the two. Year by year, while they maintained business relations in the way of trade, these two Houses grew more independent of each other and a little further apart; and it was almost inevitable that they came to be competitors in the same line of business rather than fellow workers. It was always true that each House sold more or less largely the publications of the other House; but the business came to be a simple dealing

between independent Houses. Each House was expected to attend fully to the needs of its own territory and allow the other House to do the same. For a long time the Eastern House was not supposed to circularize the Western territory, and vice versa, to increase the sale of its own periodicals; and these two Houses had to depend entirely upon each other for such sales. Then, as the number of Sunday-school and other periodicals increased, while the editor might have an office in either one of the two headquarters, yet duplicate plates were prepared, each House printing its own edition of any given book. This was true of the *Discipline,* books of the Course of Study, and other books which naturally would have a general, country-wide sale. Finally, an arrangement was made to accept the plates in the other House, of the Methodist Review, published in New York; The Classmate, published in Cincinnati; and other things of like general character, for which there was a general call.

Doubt began to be expressed, through the church as to the wisdom of this double procedure. A commission specially appointed to investigate the entire matter served from 1904 to 1908. The findings of this commission, of which James R. Day was chairman and W. W. Evans was secretary, were the same findings that had been known to the smaller number more closely related to the business during the recent years. The figures were given by which it was shown that the duplication of plates, the express charges on the plates from one House to the

other, the cost of make-up and other duplicated items, amounted to a surprisingly large sum; all of which could be charged as unnecessary and all of which was an extravagance in the conduct of the business. The Book Committee studied the problem with all care during the quadrennium beginning with 1908 and presented an exhaustive report to the General Conference in 1912; and this body, after a consideration of many days, finally with great unanimity adopted a plan for the unifying of the two Houses into one. The law under which the business was incorporated made it necessary for an act of incorporation to be secured in the State of New York and another in the State of Ohio; but the entire plan of operation and management of the House was so changed as to make one Concern, henceforth to be known as The Methodist Book Concern.

The Cincinnati House had grown, because it seemed the center of the country, into the great publishing house of all the Sunday-school periodical supplies, the whole system of Berean lesson helps, including the weekly papers issued. It had the equipment to go on with that work. New York had been the center of the book business. A great many books had been printed and bound in Cincinnati and the sales of books through the growth of the country had increased in Cincinnati until, in some years, they surpassed the amount of sales in New York. In this unification came the division of work. New York took over the manufacture

and issue of books, to a large extent, including the Graded Lessons Helps for the Sunday school; while Cincinnati took all the great bulk of the Uniform Sunday-school supplies and was soon sending its lesson helps from Maine to California and over all the regions between. It has not seemed to hinder these publications; it has not made them slower of delivery; it has greatly increased their bulk through the growth of the years.

It is hardly within the province of this statement to note the fact that the Cincinnati Sunday-school publications issued under the authority of our church are being sold in increasing quantities to the Sunday-school departments of several other denominations, the other churches finding them to be very much cheaper than they could be produced in former years by themselves, and certainly of equal grade. It is a matter worth noting in passing, perhaps, that the mailing business, through the United States Post Office, of our periodicals as a House in Cincinnati has long passed any other business in that city. To mail away to actual consumers an average of nearly thirty thousand pounds of printed matter for Sunday school use on each and every working day of the year is a remarkable statement to make.

In this plan of unification of The Book Concern there is equal authority in all parts of the work given to the Publishing Agents, except in such adjustments as they make for the carrying on of their own work, with this change: A provision was made and adopted in 1912 for a General Agent, who

should have certain authorities and perform certain duties. Without entering into a long quotation in this part of our narrative, we refer the reader and student to the *Discipline* of any issue since 1912, which will give the entire form of the articles of incorporation under which the House is now working, and will specify the duties of all the officers under it. The General Agent was to be elected by the Book Committee from one of the Agents previously elected by the General Conference.

The first General Agent elected in 1912 was Homer Eaton, the senior Agent of the New York House, who had already been in the service more than twenty years. It was a new task, following a new path. Doctor Eaton took hold of the new work with vigor and understanding, but his health suddenly failed and he died in the harness, in February, 1913; having served as General Agent only about nine months. At the annual meeting of the Book Committee, now acting wholly as one body, the sections East and West having been abolished and an Executive Committee composed of two Local Committees (East and West) having taken its place, this Committee, in April, 1913, elected Henry C. Jennings as General Agent, to succeed Doctor Eaton. He had been the senior Agent of the Western House for many years. At the same time they elected, to fill the vacancy caused by the death of Doctor Eaton, John H. Race, at that time president of Chattanooga University. It was arranged that Doctor Mains should continue in charge at New

York, Mr. Graham at Chicago, and that Doctor Race should assume the work at Cincinnati, while the General Agent should follow the routine of his duties as prescribed by the *Discipine*.

At the General Conference of 1916 George P. Mains, who had served as Publishing Agent at New York for twenty years, declined reelection, and it was decided after very careful consideration to elect but three Agents to carry on the work. At this time, Edwin R. Graham was assigned the work at New York; John H. Race was assigned to Cincinnati; and the General Agent took up his residence at Chicago, as the best center from which to carry on his part of the work. Before the close of the quadrennium the health of the General Agent gave out, resulting in his retirement from active service at the General Conference of 1920. At this General Conference the General Agency was abolished. Robert H. Hughes was elected to fill the vacancy thus caused, and the new adjustment of the Publishing Agents continued Edwin R. Graham at New York, John H. Race at Cincinnati, and located Robert H. Hughes at Chicago.

We may be pardoned at this point, as an historian who has been a long-time student of this problem of publication, if we say that we believe that the abolishing of the General Agency was a mistake, although we do not wish to argue the question. Good men, with a thorough understanding of the business, are necessary in the management of all these great Houses which we are operating; but the

idea of one strong-minded man, with an authority covering equally all parts of the business and of the country, the final authority in all greater questions of administration, seems to us an ideal plan. Such a work could not be done by a narrow man or by one who belonged more to one part of the country than another. He should be selected with the greatest care; then he should be given all necessary powers to be an able administrator; and then should be held responsible for the results. If he could not bring results, then he should be replaced with another; because his personal interest could, by no means, compare with the interest of the great work in his hands. It may be probable that we shall not return to the system of the General Agency; but we believe we would have a better and stronger administration if we did.

Without question, great improvement has been made in the work of the Book Committee in recent years. The whole organization of sections divided geographically, by which all the members of the Committee related to the New York House were separate from those related to the Western House (these sections working with each other, and then, perhaps, working over against each other, brought together for a hurried meeting once a year) had no comparison in value to the present plan by which the Local Committees have been increased from three to five in each Committee; the ten men, with the chairman of the General Book Committee, forming together what is technically called the Local

Committees in Joint Session, really the Executive Committee. This Executive Committee has been holding monthly meetings as Local Committees and are always ready with the latest information concerning any questions that are to be discussed and settled.

We take the liberty of making a suggestion which must some day be considered and answered: For one hundred years or so the church has been divided into what has been known as General Conference Districts. These are large areas of country covering several contiguous Conferences; and usually some Conferences in other lands are added. There are now fifteen of these General Conference Districts. Some man, usually a member of the General Conference, is nominated by a caucus composed of the delegates of this District; which nomination is confirmed by the General Conference. Those who are related to the work of this body of fifteen men called the Book Committee understand how hard it is to get ready, prompt, and intelligent work in the early days of any given Committee. Usually the committee man is selected from the Conference, whose turn it is for such a membership. Very often his fitness or preparation to do this kind of work is wholly ignored. He is a good man, with a teachable mind; he comes into the General Book Committee, one who has authority and a vote must help to settle all questions involved; but he lacks in information, is influenced by his environment at home. Sometimes he becomes a great thinker and

executive, a student of the work he has to do; sometimes he does not. Four years, the length of the quadrennium, goes quickly, at the end of which time there is another election. Some of these men, partially trained by this time, drop out; strangers come in and the same work goes on. Under the circumstances, we make bold to say that the Publishing Agents do not have enough executive power to do the things that sometimes should be done and for which the Committee, always partially new, do not have the necessary information. What is the remedy?

There should be a larger conception of the great work the Book Committee has to do; a larger idea of what it means in responsibility to God and man, to help in the management of an institution which must furnish so much of the intellectual food of our people. The present form of the Book Committee, we believe, should be done away. It would be vastly more effective and vastly cheaper if an Executive Committee somewhat larger than the present Executive Committee should be clothed with the present powers of the General Committee, as now made up, to meet perhaps once in three months, at a session that might require two days; hold the Agents responsible for thoroughgoing, high-class management; keep records of all proceedings; and have a report made to the General Committee on The Book Concern at each General Conference, with any recommendations for improvement or changes, in any way, asking for a report from the General

Conference Committee covering the entire business of the administration, with any changes necessary in the business management. Such a plan is possible and reasonable.

CHAPTER XVII

THE ABINGDON PRESS

The Book Concern had not been in operation for many years, as the publisher for the church, before it was discovered that the carrying of a purely denominational imprint on our books produced the inevitable result of narrowing our scope of business. We not only came to see the need of publishing books concerning our own doctrines and policies but that there was also a constant and increasing call for books of a more general nature; religious books teaching the fundamentals of faith and adding greatly to the scope of our publishing work became more and more in demand. With the denominational imprint, which was used for many years without recognizing this truth, there was only the appeal to the smaller constituency. A strong believer in the denominational policy of another church might wish to possess himself and assist in the spread of the best grade of religious literature, who would not be quite as willing to do so if the imprint on the title page credited it to one of the denominations. We may say that this savored of narrowness, and in a way it did; but we have to recognize the fact, nevertheless, that a good Baptist or Presbyterian, in the very nature of the case,

would prefer to have the book he bought have a general imprint rather than one crediting it entirely to a different denomination; and the same thing would be true if we were dealing under the same plan. It became more and more true that The Methodist Book Concern imprint, alone, lessened the output, and while it was the right and proper thing to put a certain class of our books under that imprint, it was a direct hindrance to the sales of many books of equal value. It followed that the names of the Publishing Agents came to be used more and more extensively as the principal part of the book imprint, it being a demonstrated fact that a certain class of our books sold much more largely under the individual imprint of the Agents than under the imprint of the denomination. Whether we wished it to be true was not the question; we had to face the facts. This probably grew out of the fact that nearly all the great publishing houses of this country, of every degree, used the individual names of the proprietors in their imprints; people somehow preferred that, to any reference to a church.

The final result has been that within the past few years a special name has been adopted and regularly incorporated for a certain class of our publications. We issue books now, regularly and officially, under two imprints: the second one being known as "The Abingdon Press." The Book Editor and Publishing Agents make the decision as to which imprint shall be used in every book published. If it is a purely

denominational book, such as the General Conference Journal or the regular quadrennial issue of the Methodist *Discipline,* books that are written for special denominational purposes and are supposed to interest our own church, particularly, these have the old imprint "The Methodist Book Concern"; but books of a general nature such as biography, history, travel, different phases of the world's work, all these, carry the other imprint if, in the judgment of the proper authority, that is where they belong.

One of the remarkable developments of the more recent years is the publication of the splendid series of textbooks in all sorts of training work among pupils and students, the Vacation Bible Schools, and so forth. In all this we seem to be pioneers among publishers; and many other denominational houses have discovered that they can take the joint product of our presses, with our general imprint, and utilize them in their own church work, getting a better product and at a much cheaper rate than they could be issued independently for themselves. It is now possible to continue the publication of all necessary denominational books under our old imprint, it being definitely understood that that maintains its premier place in our work, and that it always will be used as required; while the possible development of our more general plan of literary publications would seem to have no limit under the general imprint which is already more popular among all book dealers and book buyers than any denominational name could possibly be.

The selection of the name "The Abingdon Press" came about in this way: The Book Committee, under a special order of the day, had discussed for a considerable time the name which we should select; and many names were proposed and many of them were good. Finally, Professor Richard T. Stevenson, of Ohio Wesleyan University, a member of the Committee, said: "Why do we not adopt a name which shall emphasize and perhaps immortalize the earliest of our educational ideas. Our first school, which was named Cokesbury, a combination of Coke and Asbury, our only bishops at that time, was located at Abingdon, Maryland, in 1789. Why not call our new imprint 'The Abingdon Press'?" This was adopted immediately and considered a fortunate choice. It is now widely known; and since Professor Stevenson has gone to his reward, it is well for us to remember his relation to the name, just as we remember that John Dickins in 1784 gave the name "Methodist Episcopal Church" to the little body of a handful of preachers and people who became the beginning of all our work.

It is not a surrender of any of our denominational pride or influence or power that we have simply adopted this plan, for it was done only for the widening of our influence, and the increase of the sale of our publications. We welcome The Abingdon Press as part of the great machinery of The Methodist Book Concern.

CHAPTER XVIII

DEPOSITORIES AND ADVOCATES: MORE OR LESS?

THERE have been objections raised at different times by those who are greatly interested in the development of our publishing business to the increasing of the number of our depositories or salesrooms within the breadth of our country. There is only one answer necessary:

When The Book Concern was organized and established in New York City the total population of the United States was a little over three million. That company has grown until we have now within the bounds of our own United States considerably more than one hundred million. There is nothing like it in the history of national growth. A very large part of this increase has come from immigration. Nearly all of the European countries and many from farther East and the Orient have contributed to this great growth. There has never been a greater call for missionary work in any foreign land than there has always been for missionary work within the boundaries of our own land. Transportation was exceedingly difficult in all the early years of our history. Before there were railroads or steamboats, before any of the modern appliances of electricity were discovered, it was a long way from one

city to another, from one State to another. It was not quite impossible, but it was exceedingly difficult, to furnish the growing Middle West with Methodist literature from New York. That fact increased as the country grew, so that the Western House was established at Cincinnati to meet the need; and later on, for the same reasons, we had another distributing point at Chicago, another at Saint Louis, another at New Orleans, one at San Francisco, and, last of all, one at Portland, Oregon, with depositories at Detroit, Pittsburgh, and Boston. These branches were not established with the expectation that they could be operated without expense. There were many years when they did not pay; but they did do, and always have done, what they were planned to do: furnish at a convenient center the necessary books and periodicals for the work we are doing as a church. It is doubtful whether the records would show that very much money in the way of profits has been made in these branch establishments, although in later years, they are all making a better showing; but another question is: If the business created by the stimulation of sales in these branches had been eliminated, how much would the central Houses, the Publishing Houses, have lost in the bulk of sales? We believe the loss would have been very great and that in the aggregate the profit has been great; because, while there are always departments in any great business which do not individually pay, they help to make other departments pay which would be in poverty without them. We

believe the call is for more instead of less of these branch houses. That territory which can be reached within twenty-four hours by the mail system of to-day can well be taken care of in all orders for trade from a given center. Beyond that we should have the beginnings of a new center, if the growth of the country demands it. In other words, management of The Book Concern never should allow any part of the country to be lost sight of in its attempt to increase the bulk of the business.

In like manner we may speak in regard to the constant discusssion which grows, rather than lessens, on the number of Advocates which should be published in this country, in order to carry out the plans of the church. There are two distinct views of this matter and a special committee was authorized by the General Conference of 1920 to consider the whole question of the existence of the present number of weekly papers, published under the authority of the church, and what should be done about their continuance. One company of our thinking people consider this matter from the viewpoint of profit-showing, taking the ground that when a paper does not pay its way, when through subscriptions and other earnings it does not meet its expense account, it should be eliminated; that a paper does not prove its value unless it can be published at a profit. It is a common thing to compare our denominational weeklies with independent papers, which through years of strenuous effort have come to a larger circulation, and to make this comparison

to the embarrassment of the denominational weekly, when it is a fact that the independent paper has the whole country for its field; when it is not subject to, nor reckoned on, the basis of its denominational appeal; when it may have plans for publishing such contents as do not make the best or highest appeal—a matter which must always be considered by the denominational organ. There is no fairness in such a comparison. None of us would wish to adopt some of the great papers in question as denominational organs, without making many changes in them; and these changes would be most likely to destroy their wider appeal.

Nothing has done so much to foster the growth of our denomination and to contribute to its solidarity and unity of purpose as our family of Christian Advocates. One was started at the beginning, because one was needed. Others have been added as they have been needed. They have held the church together. They have printed and sent abroad the story of revival work, of increase in many ways, of church loyalty, of the building up of our churches, and the greater building up of our schools and colleges. They have told the story as nothing else could, of our mission work in foreign lands, as well as in the home field. They have helped the log-cabin pioneer on the frontier to remember that he was a part of the great family. They have been the best possible training school for the constant unity of the church, and nothing can take their place.

It is one of the fallacies of this reasoning that if three papers were consolidated into one, that one would carry the subscription list which the three had formerly. It has never worked that way. The consolidated paper would need to have more money spent upon it in different ways, and probably would carry as many subscribers (perhaps a few more) as the largest circulated paper of the three had carried before consolidation. The rest of the subscribers would inevitably be picked up by the independent papers, published in various centers which believe they should have an organ as well as any other city. We cannot believe that the church desires a long line of independent papers not in agreement, often, in vital matters, working at cross-purposes, carrying out individual notions and greatly hindering the continued unification of the church. It is a mistake to suppose that we ought ever to consider the family of Advocates from the standpoint of profit-making. The total amount of direct money lost on the publishing of the family of Advocates, in any given year, for many years past has been less —sometimes very much less—than the amount which is set apart for advertising and publicity by many of the great business houses of this country, the proprietors of which are often themselves Methodists. Some of them spend, in money, up to a half million dollars for advertising, pushing, publicity work, on a single business. The Book Concern has never spent that much on the deficits of the Advocates. What do these great proprietors do?

They make an appropriation for advertising. They charge it up to the annual expense account. The money put into advertising is a matter of profit and loss. If there are sufficient results to show that it has paid, well and good; if it has not paid, they simply try it again.

The family of Christian Advocates is to the Methodist Episcopal Church its plan for publicity, for advertising. It is the best knit together, the most unified and loyal of any of the denominations. It is so because of its Advocate family controlled and managed officially by the church. After all, it is a small matter to spend such an amount in the carrying out of the plans of the church. We ought to pay the bills of these papers. We ought to keep them going. We ought not to continue complaining because they do not make money. We ought to charge any deficit to our publicity expense account and go on without further complaint. It is the one thing that will continue to make Methodism grow.

CHAPTER XIX

IMPROVEMENTS IN BUSINESS PLANS

Not all loyal Methodists have the inclination to study too many business details and many have not the time to do it; but those who have read carefully the story of the beginnings of our work and of the business systems which prevailed in the business world a century ago, and have contrasted these with what are now in use, can easily see that all business of these later days has been greatly simplified in system. Within recent years the capital has grown so large and the bulk of business so great that a system of auditorship has been developed which is hardly possible of improvement. It includes a comptroller, whose work is that of general financial supervision, and who has the aid of a competent auditorship; and these have the advice, when desired, and assistance of the Local Committee of each House, so that as reports are prepared and sent out monthly, it is not difficult to keep a perfect record of all the items of the business, each in its proper place, and to know at the end of each week and month the exact standing of the business, by comparison, of any previous year. This greatly assists in the purchase of raw material and in making plans for the distribution of the product. Each

depository manager, no matter where he lives, is able to tell by the documents furnished him where each depository and the entire House stands in relation to the business each month in the year. This has largely come to pass as one of the primary results of the new plan which unified the two Houses, East and West, in the year 1912.

The pioneer advocate of the plan of unification of the two Houses was Mr. Robert T. Miller, a layman of Cincinnati and a long-time member of that Local Committee. It was the privilege of the author to be intimately associated with him in this and all Book Concern matters for many years. He always objected to the bulk and repetitions in the reports of the business; believing that it could be handled and reported in forms more easily understood. One day he said: "If this plan goes through by which the two Houses become one, it will be entirely easy to print a complete financial report of the business of any given year on a card the size of a postcard. It will be all that it will be necessary to have known by the managers themselves."

Since we had been gathering our statistical facts, for so many years, from so many different sources and so many different forms of bookkeeping, this did not look like a reasonable prophecy; but when the matter finally was accomplished and the total business of the year for both Houses, East and West, and all their depositories, could be consolidated into a space the size of a postcard, as Mr. Miller had prophesied, he was in his last illness and

very near the end. We took him samples, printed according to his suggestion of years before, containing a complete and sufficient exhibit of the business of that year, proving to him that the work had actually been done. He was greatly delighted with the result, feeling that it had been well worth the effort. He lived but a few weeks after that time. It was, indeed, a great achievement to gather up the business which covered the entire United States and much in other countries, to consider the great list of periodicals and Sunday-school supplies, books and their sales, every item earned by the House, with all expenses of maintaining the business, striking the proper balances, within such a space. The Book Concern invites the inspection of every interested person into the methods by which we do our business.

The One Hundredth Anniversary at Cincinnati

It will be recalled that The Book Concern at Cincinnati was established as a branch of the New York House following the order of the General Conference of 1820. The first business was done in October of that year. A notable recognition of the hundredth year of the existence of the New York House was celebrated in 1889; and when the century was completed in the Western House another notable affair took place. It is only necessary, now, to notice the fact that in one hundred years there had been a steady growth in the business, which

had during its first year a total trade of only $4,000, until the sales for the one hundredth year, including Cincinnati and the branches which had grown out of her development, amounted to considerably more than $2,000,000; and every branch and department of the work seemed to be healthier, more vigorous, and more promising than ever. The entire record of this celebration has been preserved in a handsome book, durably bound, which is worthy a place in any Methodist library.

CHAPTER XX

SHALL THE SCOPE OF OUR WORK BE ENLARGED?

This history may very well contain a question which has come to be more and more vital as we have studied more the relation of the church to the people in general. This is the question: Is it the mission of The Book Concern to publish and distribute only such books as are supposed and intended to minister directly to the growth of our church itself? Is it the wisest plan to put such a stamp upon each and all of our publications that they shall be recognized as being published for a denomination, thus narrowing the scope of subjects treated and making it necessary for our people to find some of their intellectual growth from outside sources?

It was a great embarrassment among the preachers and people of the earliest years of our church organization in this country that the books written for the special spiritual growth of the Wesleyan people in England and brought to this country for our people could not be bought of the booksellers in America. Their claim was that such special things were not in popular demand and they could not afford to import them. This made one of the earliest reasons for the organization of The Book Concern;

but we would raise the question, the fact being that this same original objection is still everywhere met among the ordinary booksellers that a certain class of books published for a certain class of people has no demand outside that class, whether it is worth while to keep them on sale. We believe that we should be as faithful in the publication of our own special line of reading as we have been; and we believe that our people should be as faithfully trained to read that class of books; but there comes the other question: Should we not also provide a wider class of reading for the people who would patronize us if we published and sold books other than those belonging peculiarly to our own denomination? To put it in another way: Does anyone now believe that we can keep our young people, or many people of any age, from reading a vast amount of literature which is not and never has been published by our own House? Is it not a fact that the chief amount of our reading is of material which we never have thought of publishing? Then comes the question, Since we must recognize the great demand for a wider range of books, should we not widen the range of our publishing, not to publish unworthy books, books that do not build up mind and heart, but to greatly increase the scope of what we are already issuing? It would seem that any book that is fit for our people to read is fit for The Book Concern to print. We must take care of our Sunday-school books, of course; we must provide the Teacher's Training Class work; we must do all this

and publish books of devotion and books of sermons; but is it true, or not true, that we are not thinking enough about the intellectual needs of the great mass of people among our laity and others who attend our churches? Would it not be wise and right for us to greatly enlarge the scope of our publishing and furnish lines of current literature and current history, a wider range of biography; in short, to keep up with the intellectual world? Why should not The Methodist Book Concern become a fountain of supply in such a way that our reading people would go less and less to the outside publishers, who do not always have the right kind of conscience?

CHAPTER XXI

GROUP INSURANCE

The Methodist Book Concern is one of the pioneers in a new idea that is attracting attention in the business world. This is known as Group Insurance; and, briefly stated, this is the plan which a number of the great old-line insurance companies are now adopting: The Book Concern carries life insurance for all its employees, and pays all the bills. The amount of the policy is equal to one year's salary, no matter who the employee may be, up to a limit of $2,400. The Book Concern carries, in round figures, about $1,000,000 of this insurance. It would seem like a large bill to pay for a plan which is founded purely on a benevolent principle. Some years the insurance bill for the entire Book Concern (about one thousand of our employees are insured) has been one per cent; sometimes it is something over this figure and sometimes less; therefore, the premium paid by the Concern will average from $7,500 to less than $15,000 per year. A policy is issued to each individual and the effect has been remarkable upon the employees themselves. In one case it may be a young woman, dependent upon her own efforts for a living, able by constant work to provide for herself; but not able to lay aside a surplus. The future is more dark than light to her.

She knows not at what time she may be stricken with illness, and, however generous her employer may be, she knows not what day her entire income may stop and she become an object of charity. But now she is insured. The company for which she works pays her expense. Suppose she is earning $20 per week; her policy is worth $1,040, and she goes about her work knowing that she has an estate which would become paid at the time of her death and take care of all possible financial embarrassment. Not only have losses been paid which have had a remarkable value in helping the heirs, in saving small homes, in helping widowed mothers; but it has seemed to put new life into the workers themselves, who have far less reason to leave an employer who is treating them in such a Christian fashion. There are no regrets expressed by any who have studied this question concerning the amount of expense involved.

Group Council

The Cincinnati House has in regular operation a very successful plan of inside House management, which is in operation in New York and Chicago with some modifications and which will be adopted by all our depositories where there is occasion for such an organization. The Group Council is made up as follows:

One from each department of the business, which includes editorial, accounting, real estate, merchandise, periodicals, composing room, electrotype foun-

dry, press room, bindery and any others that may be in operation; the foremen of each department forming another group. The Council is made up by representatives of these departments. Several of the representatives are women, as nearly all the employees of the periodical department are women. These various departments elect each a committee, usually of five, and once a month the plan is that a meeting is held at the noon hour, the Publishing Agent presiding, a luncheon is served and careful minutes are kept of all proceedings. Under this Group representative plan certain advantages are given the employees of The Methodist Book Concern which are enjoyed by very few, if any, other manufacturing plants. All questions respecting policies in the interior management of the House come before this representative Group Council. All differences are usually adjusted by the Group representatives and the foremen, if differences have arisen. If it is found that it is impossible to make such adjustment, as is sometimes the case, then the whole matter comes automatically to the head of the department and the Publishing Agent. These two reach an understanding, in the presence of all the people involved and a good spirit and happy settlement is concluded.

The Group Council has been very successful in those places where it has been put into operation. This plan can be adapted, with any necessary changes, to any part of our business. It means the settlement of all friction and trouble, if any arises.

It means the making of definite plans for improvement of any part of the business of the House. It means the good fellowship that must arise out of mutual concession and agreement. It means increasing loyalty to the Concern, and is already proving that it can take the place of any committee of any outside organization which seeks to settle and adjust the internal matters of the House. In other words, the House is proving that it is capable of taking care of all its emergencies.

It should be understood that we have used as a sample House our Cincinnati Book Concern partly because we are more familiar with the interior detailed life of that House than any other and partly because the present resident Agent at Cincinnati should have all due credit for having developed and carried out the plans which have made the headquarters House of the Western Methodist Book Concern at Cincinnati almost a model for the work we are trying to accomplish.

Pensions

For some years we have been working out a plan for the pensioning of our faithful employees, by which the problem of old age support is at least partially solved. These pension claims are reckoned upon the years of active service and upon the grade of position and amount of salary earned through the years of such active work. The pension plan is already working well and it is planned to put it into operation throughout the entire business.

CHAPTER XXII

A CASE OF FINANCIAL EMBARRASSMENT

Those who are familiar with our United States history will recall the long struggle for a stable monetary system under our government, which was not reached for many years. The history of the United States Bank is familiar. It was necessary to have a currency for the carrying on of business; credits were not large; great business corporations did not exist in any number. If a community or a city needed a currency for local business, it became a common practice for such community or city to issue its own currency. Certain of the new States, especially in the West and South, had their systems of currency; but unless a State or a city had a standing credit, through its business relations to other parts of the country, the money of these States had no standing. The paper money currency of any given State having a commercial value within its own boundaries, would be, perhaps, circulated at a discount in nearby communities and at a much greater discount further away.

It is an interesting record, found in the earlier ledgers and books of account kept by The Book Concern, that when a preacher at a distance would settle his bill at headquarters by sending the money

that was current in his own country the books would show the credit for the same, less a discount on Indiana or Missouri, or South Carolina currency, as the case might be. This discount sometimes ran as high as twenty-five per cent and sometimes a larger amount. It came to be called wild-cat currency. This wild-cat currency had less value the farther from its source of issue.

The Book Concern established its first branch in Cincinnati in 1820, beginning business in October following the General Conference of the preceding May. The new business headquarters was very welcome throughout the country which it was intended to serve. The first few years it did a business of $14,000. These Methodist books and tracts all came from New York. They were charged by Dr. Nathan Bangs, Agent of the New York House, to Dr. Martin Ruter, of the Cincinnati House, at regular rates; and at the end of the first few years, the sum of the business had reached $14,000. Doctor Ruter was a careful business man and had made no false investments. What he had sold he had received the money for. When the time for settlement came, with bills amounting to the sum of $14,000, he had the satisfaction of knowing that he had that amount in the banks of Cincinnati. When he attempted to pay his New York bills, however, with the money he had in hand, he found that it would not be accepted at all in New York as money. The wild-cat currency of the South and West would do fairly well under dis-

counts for the South and West; but it did not do for New York city and its business. It was a very embarrassing situation. Doctor Bangs, the New York Agent, greatly needed the money to carry on and enlarge his work and pay his own bills. Doctor Ruter had the money to pay everything he owed. It could not be received at New York, as no bank would touch it. They were in a real dilemma. Unless there were a solution it meant the stoppage of the Western business; and, as money conditions were getting worse rather than better, it would also put a stop to the doing of business from the West directly to New York.

Doctor Bangs sets down in his *History of Methodism* this interesting statement, that owing to the great need he had for a settlement with his partner in the West, after making it a subject of much meditation and prayer he wrote to Doctor Ruter instructing him to go down to the River Levee in Cincinnati and hire the use of two small vessels—sloops, they were called—hiring two rather than one, owing to the less risk in the shipment. He was then to take his money and purchase such commodities as would sell in the New York market, and thus be turned into the money which he so greatly needed. It is related that Doctor Ruter, after making the matter also a subject of meditation and prayer, went down to the water front, hired two small vessels, filled one with cotton bales from Kentucky and the other with leaf tobacco, as Cincinnati was then, as now, a great market for that product. When these vessels

were filled, he started them for New York, down the Ohio River and the Mississippi River, and then towed from New Orleans across the Gulf of Mexico and up the Atlantic Coast to New York, as was the plan in those times. It was something very different from the method of monetary exchange of these later days. The history records that the cotton-loaded vessel reached New York, the cotton was reshipped to Liverpool and sold at a handsome profit; but that the tobacco-laden vessel got into a storm and was wrecked off the New Jersey coast, and the entire cargo was lost.

We give this as the history of some of our early embarrassments on the money question. We do not offer to point the moral, as some might do, that it was plain that the Head of the Methodist Church did not wish the church to engage in the tobacco business. Of this, we are sure: That the settlement by a centralized government in the United States of the question of a stable currency has been one of the great improvements that have come to us in these later times.

CHAPTER XXIII

CONCERNING ORGANIC UNION

We should like to speak of a matter which is looming ahead of us as a church, as one of the great possibilities to be accomplished not far in the future, in which the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, is equally interested with us.

For a good many years there has been much written and spoken on the question of uniting the two churches—divided in 1844—into one body. It is so well known and so much in the thought of the church, North and South, that it is not necessary for us to enter into further details. There is a great company of people, sincere, faithful, earnest, who believe that the two churches should be united into one, to go on in the prosecution of a mission in which the church started as a unit, one hundred and thirty-five years ago. There is another class, just as earnest, just as sincere, just as faithful, who are held back from a perfect harmony with this idea by a great mass of details which would enter into such a unification; and because of these differences of opinion there is yet a considerable hesitation in all parts of our land.

We have no wish to enter into an argument, but state what we believe to be the relation of this

question to the history of The Book Concern. We have the same origin. Both churches go back to John Wesley, looking to him as our great source of doctrine. We have the same itinerant system; we have had the same pioneering work in this country. The Methodism of one hundred years ago had its largest fruit in the South. Bishops Asbury and McKendree were as much the official heads, historically, of the Church South as of ours. The time came for the division. It was a regrettable thing to happen, but it did occur. There was no change in doctrinal statement, no change in what we all believed in Christian experience, no change in the missionary spirit which was ready to go to the far frontier, North or South, for the carrying out of the plans of the fathers. We read the same books; we all believed the same doctrines; we had an Advocate in New York and another in Charleston. If we had been wiser, it is quite possible that we would have been more charitable, each section to the other, for the peculiarities which grew out of conditions which obtained in the various individual localities. When the Civil War came on, the situation was aggravated and we have only slowly been recovering from it.

Now, speaking for the two churches, what ought we to do? Can we do as much for the kingdom of God, for the spread of his truth, united as we have done separately? For it is a great record of progress which both these churches have made. Would there be more loyalty to the truth; would there be

more anxiety about its spread; would we do better work in our Sunday schools; would we help more people into the Kingdom if we were together, than if we should continue as we are? Is it true that there are, anywhere across this great land, conditions that might be improved if we were one church instead of two? Is there very much in what is called "overlapping"? Is it a fact that whenever a church in any given locality would desire to change its relationship from one church to the other, or any minister desired to leave one church for the other, that there might be serious objection? Is the work retarded or is it helped by the present condition? Is there anything in the question of the traditions that still are very much alive in many parts of our geographic area; and that many people, from hereditary reasons, would object to being united by a vote, let us say, of two General Conferences?

We do not pretend to answer these questions. We are all thinking of them and it is likely to be a little while before we get them all settled; but meantime, is it not a fact that practical unification may be going on in different ways and the churches constantly drawing together? We speak of our publishing business. There is no difference in the spirit and plan of the two publishing houses, North and South. We can unify without any trouble on very many joint publications, and we are doing so. We can help each other and save money in the exchange of Sunday-school periodicals, and we are doing so. We can put a joint imprint on Hymnals

and Catechisms, as we now do and everybody will be happy because of it; there will be no possible friction occurring from it. We can unify on our literature and many other things, in which we are interested in common and in which we believe in common. It is impossible to picture what might grow out of a more united plan in our publishing work. The branch which was established in 1820 at Cincinnati, tributary to New York, had until the time of the division, twenty-four years later, its large continually growing patronage in the South. When the division came and the new church in the South made plans to take care of its own literary needs, it was a hard blow to the Cincinnati House, which had to look to the more sparsely settled North and Northwest for its trade. All that has been worked out. The wonderful equipment of the House at Cincinnati, together with the equipment of the House at Nashville would, for many years to come, take care of all possible needs in the publishing world; and in that way a large amount of money could be saved. A new unification could be carried out and the House at Nashville and the branches at Dallas and Richmond could be harmonized in plan of service with the House in the North, and together produce such a literature as would be for the healing of the nations.

We are hoping for this time to come; that one of the results of the long discussion of unification will be at least the unification of the publishing business of the church, whereby we will be far more

united than we have ever been in the past. There is not the slightest reason that we should not publish together in entire harmony of plan, the same kinds of literature for our people that we did in the days of the beginning, when the church was first organized.

CHAPTER XXIV

THE PANAMA-PACIFIC INTERNATIONAL EXPOSITION

An interesting item in the history of The Book Concern is in its relation to the Panama-Pacific International Exposition, which was held in San Francisco in 1915. This was, in all probability, the most complete and satisfactory exposition ever held, up to this date, in the world. The matter of utilizing the exposition for a more complete telling of the story of The Book Concern was taken up and passed upon at the General Conference of 1912.

The *Journal* of that Conference gives us on page 685 the authorization for an exhibit of Methodism at this exposition. From that authorization the call was issued in the form of an invitation to world-wide Methodism to unite in an exhibit that would worthily represent the church in all her work of applied Christianity. The wish was expressed that this might be the most important and far-reaching and educating exposition of Methodist interests that the world up to this time had ever seen. The general boards of all the connectional institutions, the colleges and other institutions of learning were all to be invited to cooperate in the plan. Following this general authorization, the Book Committee took

action at its meeting in 1913 to prepare an exhibit of our publishing interests which would be adequate to the occasion.

The exhibit of universal Methodism as contemplated in the original invitation was not carried out in completeness, as the various boards of the church decided to federate in their exhibits with other Protestant denominations, composing the Federal Council of Churches, and covering the same items. Under the very generous plans of the Book Committee an exhibit was created and maintained during the entire ten months of the exposition which was agreed to be, by all who were interested, as worthy of the place and the institution that was represented.

A complete exhibit of the work and output and the working plans of The Methodist Book Concern was shown, and multitudes of people were greatly interested, many thousands of them being Methodists who up to that time had not known in any especial way about the work of The Book Concern enterprise. More than one hundred and twenty thousand signed our register as interested visitors and examined our products with enthusiasm, and became more than ever the friends of The Book Concern. It is worthy of record and a matter of satisfaction as proving the justification of the expense involved, that the business of The Book Concern, for the following year, was increased by more than $100,000, the larger part of which could be traced directly to the influence of our exhibit.

All details of this work were carefully managed and The Book Concern was everywhere widely recognized. The Grand Prize was won for the quality of our printing, binding, and general book-making; and the Gold Medal, the highest award in the department, was granted unanimously on our Sunday-school literature, both for its quantity and mechanical quality, and particularly for its power of direct and correct interpretation and teacher-training; both in our Uniform and Graded Systems.

It ought to be remembered with gratification by all our people, that the highest authorities have pronounced, officially, that The Methodist Book Concern is at the front of the work for which it has been organized and maintained.

CHAPTER XXV

THE BOOK CONCERN IN COMING DAYS

THERE is no more remarkable piece of history growing out of past achievement than the story of The Book Concern from its beginning until now. The time covered is about one hundred and thirty-five years. During that time a very great advance has been made in all departments of world civilization. The time crosses from the latter years of the eighteenth century until it reaches the earlier years of the twentieth century. From any standpoint, this great period of a century and one third has a remarkable story to tell. These years have held more of culture, of character, and of conquest than has any preceding century. The epoch has climbed more mountains, crossed more plains, plowed more acres, established more homes, built more schools, invented more labor-saving machines, wrested more secrets from nature, harnessed more of nature's elements into useful service; it has had more preachers and more sermons, more teachers, more books, better food for the people, better clothing, more patriotism, more vision, more world citizenship, than has come to any other century in all the world's history. And it is not an accident nor a matter of indifference that The Methodist Book

Concern has lived and served in this whole country during all the years of this great period we have named.

It is not an overclaim that The Methodist Book Concern has always insisted that it was carried on for the benefit of the common people; and so the church, by its publishing plan, has reached down, through all the years, to where the common people are, and without any question, more than any other agency in the land it has helped them to study and to think along the best lines. The impulse to do all this came from the mother country. The prime mover in the provision of cheap reading matter, as we all understand, was John Wesley, the Apostle of Methodism: the man who wrote books, who translated other books from other languages; who rewrote and combined in cheaper and easier form many more of the best books of his time, who maintained a system of disposing of these books; who wisely sold them—did not give them away—and so kept a fund for the production of other books; the man who did all this and, at the same time, traveled on horseback and in his carriage, preaching hundreds of sermons each year, until he was the busiest, wisest, most approachable man of the age in which he lived. And John Wesley's example was adopted and adapted by his sons in the gospel in America.

At the close of the Revolutionary War this was a poor country. It had a very sparse population. It had a great horde of savages on its frontier. There was constant expectation of attack and constant

preparation for defense. The circuit-rider went everywhere and was ready with his sermon on practical righteousness almost before the log cabin of the settler was built. This itinerant company did more than any other force of the time to create a moral atmosphere and a patriotic principle through all the new country as fast as it was settled. It could not do very much in the way of free distribution of literature. The people did not have the money to secure its printing. What they could do they did; but everywhere the itinerant preacher had his small supply of vital books which he was ready to dispose of at the lowest possible price. Here and there, throughout the great West, there exists to-day some of the relics of those old home libraries which were sold to our people.

And yet the spirit of distribution of free literature was always there. The first gift ever voted from the profits of The Book Concern was to our one young, new school, Cokesbury College, the sum of $800; and this was voted a year before they had ever made a dollar in profits. Such was their faith that they sold the books and paid that money.

The year The Book Concern was organized, among other things provided was that when profits should accrue they would be used to care for the preachers, especially those who were worn out; for the school; for the distant missions; and if any were left, it might be used for the payment of debts on the churches. So far as we have been able to discover, this is the first statement ever made by our church

concerning the care of mission work. It is quite likely that the missions they had in mind referred to work among the Indians on their own frontier and beyond, and did not take in the heathen nations of other lands. But the missionary spirit was there, and it was the same spirit which has been so largely developed in later years. It is not to be forgotten that The Book Concern in this way officially committed itself to the support of mission work thirty years before the Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church was organized at all. So it may be seen that, from the very first, the loyalty of our people was stirred and they were committed to all these larger plans while The Book Concern was still in its earliest infancy.

To us who think about it now, the marvel is that they could depend so implicitly upon the making of certain profits. The only thing between The Book Concern in its early years and bankruptcy each year was the constant faithfulness of the preachers who made up for the lack of what they had to sell, in variety, by their earnestness and faithfulness to the people. It must be remembered that this was before the days of all the periodical literature, which has since grown so great. Not a Sunday-school lesson leaf existed in the wide world; not a Sunday-school weekly paper or any system of interpretation for the Sunday-school worker; no child literature for the younger children; and, as we have said elsewhere, no marvelous output of fifteen or twenty tons per day of Sunday-school lesson helps was

within the reach of the minds of men. We did not have an Advocate nor a magazine. The literature which to-day requires millions of pounds of paper on which to be printed was not thought of. The larger half of all the publishing and selling, by which we mean the Sunday-school output, had not been even thought of by John Wesley or any of the Sunday-school founders of this country. All they had to sell was a few books and pamphlets. The first thirty years of the business of The Book Concern, its entire catalogue would not have covered four octavo pages, while now the catalogues list thousands of books originally produced by The Book Concern, from which our people may choose. The first catalogues listed simply a handful of books which taught plainly the great verities of religion; and these were impressed by our preachers upon the people; and these books were what they bought, and on these books they made what money the profit account showed.

It must have meant a great amount of industrious work producing the profit on these books, many of which were small, selling for only a few cents a copy. It must have been a very small profit that was made, and it is safe to say that no generation of our Methodist people have ever bought or read the same proportion of religious books and pamphlets as were literally consumed by the people of that first generation in this country. It is, of course, a certainty that there were almost no other books. They did not have an opportunity for any extensive

reading. The first of all religious weeklies was The Christian Advocate. Daily papers were exceedingly scarce. Illiteracy was common; the man who could read and write and possessed a dozen Methodist books was a capitalist in those days.

We believe that we may now turn over the leaf and show a contrast between the conditions of that time and the conditions under which we live to-day that would be very surprising to people who have not thought of them. We speak in round numbers when we say that from those early days down to the present time more than six millions of dollars have been given out of the profits made by The Book Concern for the care of our retired and worn-out ministers and their widows. When we consider the many other objects which we were called upon to assist in supporting—the salaries and traveling expenses of our bishops, for many years; the payment of the expenses of the General Conferences for nearly one hundred years; the subsidies that were paid to maintain and put upon a paying basis our large family of Advocates, costing in the aggregate many hundreds of thousands of dollars; the putting on a paying basis the long list of Sunday-school supplies which now we publish at a profit, all and each of which cost The Book Concern hundreds of thousands before they were made to pay expenses; also the extra expenses of the establishment of our various depositories which were made necessary by the increase of our church, in the aggregate amounting to more than the total amount

paid to our retired and worn-out men—it seems a very remarkable feature of the work which has been accomplished.

This is not the place where we need to make an absolute statement in actual dollars of the amount thus spent; but we simply call attention, in the larger sense, to what has been done and add to that fact that we now possess, as a Book Concern, a property in buildings, equipment, stock on hand and various assets, totaling $7,000,000 over and above the amounts expended as above noted. In this way we get a glimpse of what has been done; and it is not out of place to say that the loyalty of the church has not been anywhere else more perfectly exemplified. Of course it is understood, and a study of our catalogues and of what we constantly issue will prove it, that we have furnished the best literature of its kind in each department attempted, in order to gratify and help the people; and they have responded by constantly increasing patronage, which now amounts to a total of over $5,000,000 per year.

Growing out of these facts we must consider also the largely increased interest manifested by our church in the general work of the church. The great question of missions, authorized and fostered and carried on by our church in foreign lands, has foremost consideration. Millions of dollars of Methodist money each year go into the foreign mission fields. The same is true of our educational work and of every interest which we have, on mis-

sionary lines, in this country and in many other countries.

A very serious question, which was always involved in the choosing of the ministry by our best young men, was the question of financial support. We should not forget that nearly all the ministers of the first generation in this country were men who had no homes. It was not possible for them to lay any kind of a burden upon the people to whom they preached. They took from them what they had to give, what they chose to give. If the circuit-preacher had eighty dollars per year in money, he had his full allowance. Aside from that, he had his living, which he got wherever he stopped. The good women of some neighborhood would meet, and out of homespun cloth they would cut and make for him his next suit of Sunday clothes. He took this suit, and in return did faithful pastoral work, visiting people everywhere. He lived among them, and whatever cash his horse required for the year came out of the eighty dollars of his allowance. These men were among the people, and yet they lived solitary lives. If one of them married, he almost invariably was obliged to retire from the itinerancy to locate, get a little farm, or enter into some other sort of mechanical work by which he could support his family. It is a pathetic fact, not to be forgotten when we contrast those old trying days with these, that for the first fifty years of work in the Methodist Church in America, the average effective life in the itinerancy was but twelve

years. The men wore themselves out—homeless, often helpless, though not old; they slept under the stars or in old log cabins, anywhere, that they might carry the gospel into the next community; and they died young, in the midst of their years, hardly ever beyond thirty years of age. When here and there a man lived to be old, he was a marvel to the others. It is no wonder that all the surplus funds that could be gathered were turned over to these men who were living their lives so faithfully. No wonder that the sympathies of the laity of the church were enlisted so largely, and it is no wonder that down through the years this sympathy has continued.

There was no reason for the oft-made statement that The Book Concern belonged to the preachers. That was true only by the courtesy of the laymen. Long ago they yielded up the rights of the laity to the profits, which were made, on the ground that preachers deserved and needed all the money that could be made. This generous sentiment has always obtained among the laymen of the church.

Anyone who will trouble to go back through the Minutes of the Conferences and note in the records the amount of money paid each year to the company known as Conference Claimants, that is, those who had claims on the funds of the Conference, will be greatly surprised not only at the amounts paid in the past but at the fine increase seen in the present. Strictly speaking, the Methodist preacher does not have a "salary." He has an allowance, fixed by

the proper church committee. The allowance is fixed on the basis of his need, but it has never been construed as a regular claim. We have made the figures on one average Conference. If the total amount of deficiencies justly owing to the men of that Conference, covering a space of forty years, were put at interest at six per cent, in comparison the amount that has been raised—thought of too often as a benevolence purely for the support of the Conference Claimant—would be very much smaller as a total than the total interest accrued on the deficiencies. It will therefore be seen that for a great many years the amounts raised by the Conferences for its Claimants averages much less than the amount of deficiencies annually created by lack of full payment of salaries.

We come now where we can say, with great satisfaction on the historic basis of the above statements, that there has developed a remarkable change in this whole question. There is no question of our church life or plans that meets with greater cordiality than the care of our veteran ministers. The collections taken by the churches have very largely increased. The effort to create endowment funds in most of the Conferences has met with very great success. It is given out by the authorities in the General Board of Conference Claimants that our church, in all such endowment funds, now has the sum of $27,000,000; the interest on this amount being a part of the general contribution of the church to this cause. The greatest thing, however,

which has been brought to pass and is now a law of the church is what is called the prorating system. There are four items which belong to the general budget in each charge known as ministerial support; these are not classed at all in the list of benevolent collections. They are as follows: salary of the pastor, salary of the district superintendent, salary of the bishops, and the claim of the superannuates or annuitants—meaning this worn-out and retired minister who still has the same kind of claim that he had when he was a pastor. The claim of the annuitant, or retired minister, is based upon a certain percentage which gives him half his average salary as an effective minister. The law of the church provides that there must be a prorata division on the income of these four claimants; that no pastor has any legal right to accept his full salary if there is any lack in making up the entire amounts for the other three parties to this contract. It means accuracy, carefulness, and faithfulness to the plan. The preacher has no right to say he received his salary, let us say one thousand dollars, when the district superintendent lacked ten dollars of his amount; when the bishop lacked half of his; when the Conference Claimant, who needed it most of all, lacked a large percentage of his rightful claim. Some Conferences are carrying out the plan, doing exactly the right thing; other Conferences are working toward it and before many years go by the Conference Claimant will be as certain to get what belongs to him by right as does the pastor; and when

that comes to pass he will have a sufficient amount for a comfortable living. We do not argue the right or wrong of such a provision, for it is now the law of the church, and it should be carried out in the same spirit with which we do our other work. There has been such an improvement in the matter that we have no doubt of the final consummation.

It is well known that whatever amount the Book Committee annually sets aside from the earnings or profits of The Book Concern as a dividend to be distributed among the Conferences on a certain approved basis becomes a part of the amount which is paid to our retired veterans, not as a part of the amount which should come to them from prorating salaries with the others, but as an amount which comes in addition. It is now a certainty that we shall distribute in the future, as we have in the past, probably a million dollars each quadrennium to the Conferences for this purpose, provided no change is made in the system.

This leads us to the next step in this general statement; which is that the time has come for us to consider the larger demand upon The Book Concern profits as this work is related to the development of the church in other parts of the world, and especially in our general mission fields. It proved as necessary in mission lands as in home lands, in our earlier experience, to utilize the printing press; and it has come to pass, with the growth of our missionary enterprise, that we have printing and publishing houses in a large number of our great

missionary centers. We do not hesitate to utter our belief that this printing business of whatever kind—the printing of books, weekly periodicals, Sunday-school supplies, all these—should be printed and sent out to the heathen world by The Methodist Book Concern. It has now become a fact more and more apparent that the church will take care of its worn-out ministers as it ought to do and we believe it desires and plans to do. Suppose we should distribute $100,000 per year to the Conferences, under the old plan, until we became still better off than we now are; and then suppose we used the balance of the average dividend of recent years—$200,000—for the propagation of the gospel under the general publication authority of The Book Concern, in harmony with the plans of the Board of Foreign Missions. What would happen?

In the first place, it would release the funds that are now used for publishing purposes by the Mission Board for its more natural and legitimate missionary work, for preaching and teaching and the building up of schools. As matters stand now The Book Concern has no relation to the publishing or bookselling business in our foreign mission fields, carried on by our missionaries, than does any other independent house. The houses in foreign lands that are doing the work that The Book Concern might and should do, are treated exactly as independent and foreign houses, by our Book Concern; treated no better and sometimes not so liberally, as they are treated by the great publishing houses of

this country and England. This is a serious matter. If the Methodist Publishing House in Shanghai cannot buy on as good terms the books it needs for an ever-growing constituency from The Book Concern as it can buy the same from great publishing houses in this country, then something is wrong in the principle of our management. We can no longer plead poverty simply as the reason why we should give less time to purchasers; why we should always sell the book and never consign it for sale. There is no reason apparent to us why we cannot have a regular Book Concern depository at Shanghai, at Manila, at Singapore, at probably two or three places in India; at Zurich, at Rome, at Bremen. There is no reason why the proper scholarship cannot be found to translate our Scriptures and the best and most vital of our smaller books into the vernacular of the common people and put them into the hands of our missionaries and our native mission helpers, backed by The Book Concern with a fund set aside each year for donations of such literature, thus relieving the Missionary Board of the burden, and taking upon us as a Book Concern the care of such work, without any reference to any profit-showing, but because we are now, under the blessing of God, able to do it.

Suppose a new press is necessary for one of these mission printing houses. Who should buy it? Where should there be a responsibility except in the great Publishing House at home? Why not have such a system in these half dozen, more or less, Pub-

lishing Houses in foreign fields, by which at stated times there should be a careful inspection of all the machinery owned and operated in these foreign houses, by The Methodist Book Concern, such inspection to be carried out by the best mechanical skill it is possible to secure, keeping every item of the manufacturing work up to date, and thus becoming an example to all business of like kind in those countries?

Such a plan, worked out as it should be, would no doubt call for the service of an additional skilled man, to be called the Superintendent of Foreign Work for the Book Concern, or something like that. He should be charged with at least a quadrennial inspection of all this field and be subject to the authority of the Publishing Agents at home, in everything which would keep up to date, all around the world, the Service Department of The Methodist Book Concern. Can anyone see why The Book Concern, with its growing power, should not be as great and influential in the lands where our mission fields are cultivated as it is in the United States of America? Such a time must come, although we cannot fix the date, when The Book Concern will have this enlarged field; when, through endowments, the prorating of salaries and other methods, the veterans of the church will be cared for in all their need; and if that is true, work toward that result should begin without delay.

We have referred elsewhere to the Preachers' Fund which was organized at the beginning of the

life of the church in this country, by which a contribution of two dollars per year was received from each of the traveling ministers of the church, the purpose being to build up a fund, the interest of which should be applied annually to the care of the veterans. We have expressed the belief that it was a mistake to abolish that plan, for it had been carried on, through these one hundred and thirty odd years, with the growing number of ministers in the church, each one paying even such a sum as two dollars into the treasuries of the fund each year, it would have amounted by this time to many millions of dollars; and if that had been the case, all the needy under our rules would have been cared for as they never have been; and The Book Concern could go on in its program of mighty service, both benevolent and business, under the plan we have outlined here.

CHAPTER XXVI

THE CONCLUSION OF THE MATTER

METHODISM owes very much to her literature as one of the great factors which has brought her to her present strength in the world. The literature of the church is a force which has not only helped to spread its truth but which has been of immeasurable value in holding the church together. The unity of the church in its doctrines and in its program of service and its outreach to the entire world has been assured by its printed page more than by any other one cause; and the Unity of the church, in the course of its progress, has been a very great matter in bringing it to its present position.

The Methodist Book Concern was organized and started upon its career in the very beginning of the organic life of the republic. George Washington had been President only four months at the date of this organization; and The Book Concern as an institution has gone on parallel with the republic in its development and the development of the country. The circuit-rider has gone with the settler into every part of the land. The pioneer farmer has been served with good books by the pioneer preacher. These books were the cheapest, up to their time, in all the history of books; and they became the basis of doctrinal belief which has been

one of the great factors in our national greatness. Perhaps it has not been as fully considered as it should have been, that the unity of this nation has largely developed from the unity of belief which has gone from the preaching of the same gospel in all parts of our land, so that Methodism is one everywhere; and the entire country has been greatly affected by that fact. To put it in another way, no people is any better than its creed, no nation will rise higher than the height of its heaven, no country can come finally to moral greatness, which is the basis of all greatness, unless it is a religious nation.

The Methodist Book Concern in America, doing what it did for the common people, had a great part in the right beginnings of our national thinking and believing. John Wesley was a pioneer in everything that related to cheap books; books within the reach of the people. The books he wrote and edited, many of which he brought down to simple statement and narrow form and put into the hands of the English people at the lowest possible prices, revolutionized bookmaking and bookreading of that country and that time, and was adopted very naturally in this country. It is not a small matter that it was the duty of each itinerant to carry with him and furnish to his people books of a religious nature —small books, cheap books for the most part. It was as important a part of his duty as preaching. The circuit-rider in this country created a like revolution in the price of books, and where he left volumes to be studied by young and old in the pioneer

homes, he left a real anchorage for the faith of the people.

It is a fact that our periodical literature of to-day leads the world. For one hundred years it has been true. Within five years from its beginning the Christian Advocate had a larger circulation than any periodical of any kind in the United States; and to-day, the family of Christian Advocates occupies the premier position in the realm of religious weeklies. These weeklies cover the land and carry the tidings of what Methodism is doing toward bringing in the Kingdom more fully, more certainly than any other influence that resolves our church into one great family. Indeed, a very large part of the present life of the church would testify that the love of the church and the belief of religious things has been largely made by the Advocates, which they began to read in childhood and kept up to the present day.

The Sunday-school literature issued by The Book Concern and sent everywhere is one of the outstanding improvements of the present time, beginning exactly one hundred years ago in the little paper called "The Youth's Instructer," and from that going on and multiplying as the church has needed, until we have the most complete and competent system of religious instruction furnished to the Sunday-school world. From a beginning of a dozen children, in the first Sunday school organized in Virginia by Bishop Asbury, to the present time, when our Sunday-school pupils are numbered by many millions,

more and more perfectly supplied with the proper literature—this also is a great matter. From having no printed matter of any kind for our first schools until they had been running for about forty years or more, they now send out an average of fifteen tons of Sunday-school literature for each working day of the year, all the year around; and this, from the post office of one of our Publishing Houses alone and all of it of the best, most approved, most carefully edited material for the study of the Scriptures. This is also one of the great outstanding facts of the present Christian life of the world.

It is our judgment, now, that the church has a sufficient mechanical and editorial equipment, with sufficient capital, to do the work for the complete utilizing of our opportunity as a church. Certainly it would seem that such a literature should be patronized and used by every Methodist everywhere, and certainly each of all our Sunday schools should have the supplies from our own presses, and certainly each and every Methodist family in all the land should have an Advocate as a weekly visitor and an assistant pastor and daily helper; and certainly, the product of our presses in the form of books, approved by the best authorities, issued for the intellectual and spiritual help of our people, should have a patronage exceeding by many times that which we now have. It is past comprehension, almost, that anyone can call himself a loyal Methodist unless he loyally and carefully abides by these rules.

It is not the greatest item connected with The Book Concern and its life, but nevertheless it is a great item, that we refer with satisfaction to the constant stream of beneficence which goes to worn-out and retired servants of the church from the profits of this great business. The aggregate runs into millions of dollars. The comfort and intelligence which has resulted in the homes of our veterans is a matter of satisfaction and we congratulate the church and hope that the business of The Book Concern may be so increased by larger patronage from among our own people that this stream of beneficence may be likewise enlarged. There is almost no limit to the results that may come from the enterprise in future days, which was started by a handful of men filled with faith, and less than a handful of money, one hundred and thirty-five years ago.

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